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Bomb explodes on New York subway, injuring dozens

A BOMB exploded on a crowded New York City subway train in the heart of Wall Street yesterday, turning the car into chaos and injuring at least 37 people, four critically.

Unconfirmed reports said one person was killed in the explosion that ripped through a No. 4 Brooklyn-bound train as it pulled into the Fulton Street station in the financial district just after 1:30 p.m.

Police and emergency medical service spokesmen denied there

was a fatality. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said there were possibly two explosions within seconds of each other, but gave few other details at a curbside news conference in a street filled with ambulances and police cars.

CBS News reported that a suspect was in custody and was held at the Cornell University Burn Center, where he is being treated for severe burns.

No organization has claimed responsibility for the bombing.

The explosion occurred a few hours before the height of rush hour in the shadow of the World Trade Center, where a bombing killed six and injured over 1,000 people on February 26, 1993.

There were unconfirmed reports that one man was injured when the device blew up in his lap, giving rise to speculation that the man was the bomber and was

MARILYN HENRY and news agencies
 NEW YORK

en route to another destination. The device appeared to be some kind of glass jar, filled with flammable liquid and with an external igniter, said Police Commissioner William Bratton.

The incendiary device was apparently on the sixth car of the train, said Bratton. Hundreds of passengers rushed out of the train, leaving brief-

cases and purses behind as they ran for safety.

"People were running, and trampling, and it was mayhem. It was just chaos," a passenger, Bennett Fischthal, told a local TV station. The train was crowded with passengers standing, and the explosion set off a ball of flame, he said.

The subway station sits below

the section of Broadway that forms the "canyon of heroes," the route of ticker tape parades. Wall Street sits about five blocks south, City Hall four blocks to the north.

The train was loading and unloading passengers when the explosion occurred, on the sixth anniversary of the bombing of the Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland.

"There was a lot of flame, a lot of people running around on fire and a lot of people helping

them," Fischthal said. "There were people on the ground, burning, rolling around," he said. "It looked like a couple of people were unconscious and there were a lot of people putting them out."

Giuliani arrived at the explosion site about an hour after the blast. Victims wearing oxygen masks were on stretchers along Broadway.

All subway service to lower Manhattan was halted, stranding half a million passengers.

Talks on elections, pullback to be separate

JON IMMANUEL
 and DAVID MAKOVSKY

FOREIGN Minister Shimon Peres and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat agreed yesterday to conduct separate but parallel talks on redeployment and elections.

The highly-sensitive issue of where the IDF will actually pull back from in the territories is to be decided between Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Arafat, according to an Israeli official who attended the meeting between the two leaders.

Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, who participated in the talks, said the issues of redeployment and the transfer of more civilian authority to Palestinian control will be dealt with at the Rabin-Arafat level.

Elections, economic development, and issues left over from the first stage of the DOP, such as prisoners, will continue to be discussed in Cairo starting next week.

The two-tier arrangement places more emphasis on redeployment than on elections, as requested by the Palestinians; but also separates the two issues, at least procedurally, as Israel has demanded.

"The fact that we have decided to start the second stage negotiations in the order that we have explained shows the seriousness of our commitment," Peres told reporters after the two-hour meeting at Arafat's sea-front office in Gaza.

"We already feel there was positive progress," said Arafat. Sarid sharply denied a Channel One report that Peres and Arafat were heading for a deal that would involve IDF redeployment away from Jenin, Ramallah, and Bethlehem. "In the most authoritative way, I can say that absolutely no locations have been discussed. It is not true, nor would it be wise. This is being left for Rabin and Arafat."

Israel favors negotiations now on the principle of IDF partial redeployment from specified locations in the territories, as part of a package involving Palestinian elections and transfer of additional civilian authority.

When asked whether the Palestinians accepted or rejected this, Sarid replied, "They neither accepted nor rejected this. Our sense is that they feel this could be the basis for negotiations between Rabin and Arafat."

A staged withdrawal was not raised, Arafat spokesman Marwan Kanfani said.

"All of us are committed to the DOP. The only thing we really want is to introduce the necessary ingredients and steps, learning from our experience in Gaza. And even this will be done by mutual consent," Peres said.

He said the security talks would involve direct Arafat-Rabin meetings and also contacts through "fax, telephone, and emissaries," all held in complete secrecy and without deadlines.

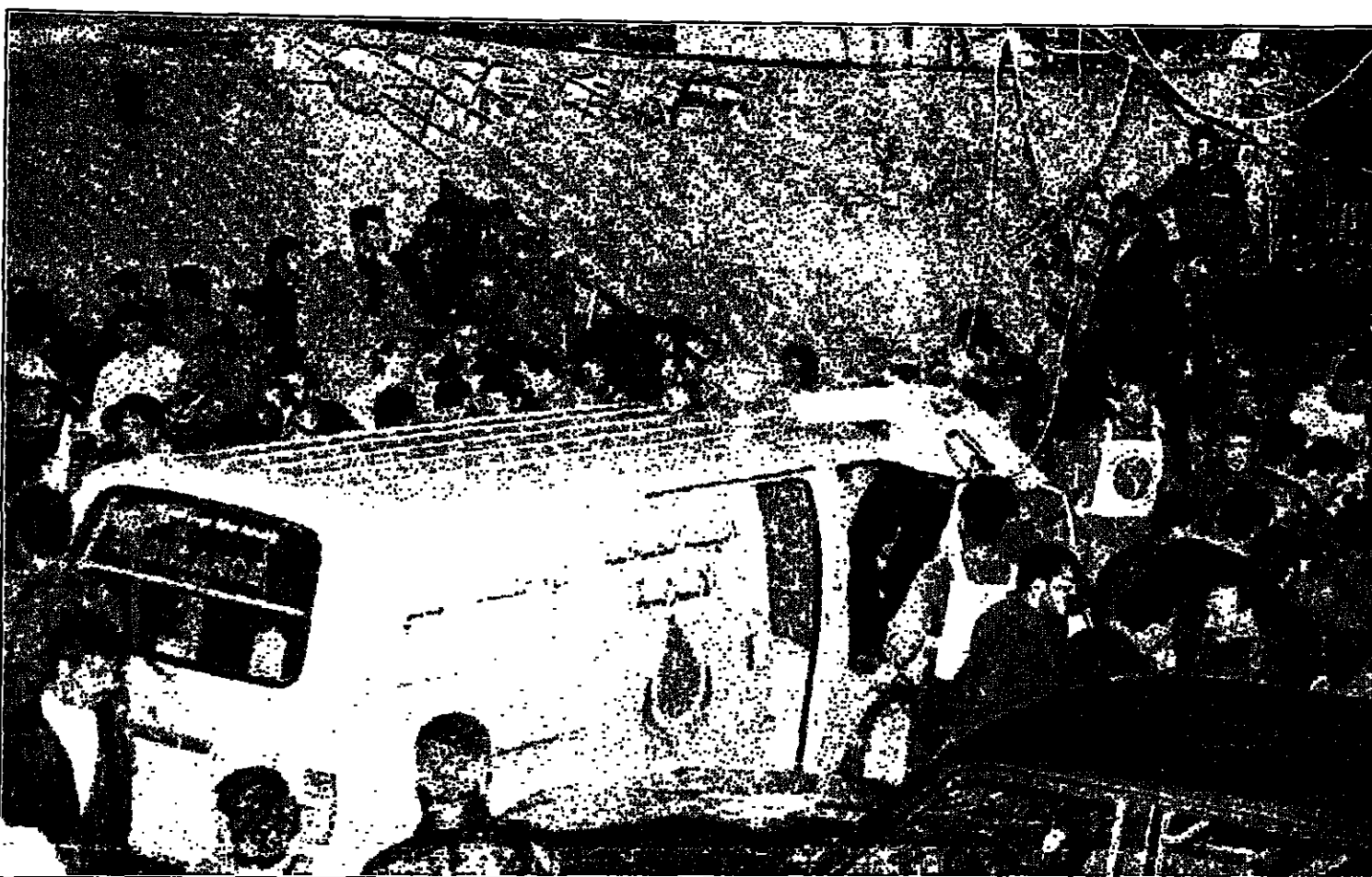
"We spoke generally, not in detail. Actions speak louder... The important thing is that we are taking into consideration Israeli security," Arafat said.

Kanfani said that other issues mentioned in the talks were the Palestinian decision to establish an industrial park, safe passage between Gaza and Jericho, and prisoners.

Hizbullah blames Israel for Beirut bomb

At least 4 killed by blast in heart of Hizbullah area

DAVID RUDGE



An ambulance tries to drive through the crowd gathered at the site of yesterday's bomb blast in Beirut. (Reuters)

HIZBULLAH last night accused Israel of being responsible for the car bomb which killed at least four persons and wounded 16 in the heart of its stronghold in a southern Beirut suburb yesterday.

The organization's radio station issued a statement charging that Israel was unable to hit its fighters in southern Lebanon and had switched to attacking civilians in Beirut.

In Jerusalem, government officials refused to respond to the accusation.

Nevertheless, IDF and South Lebanese Army troops along the northern border and in the security zone were said to have been put on full alert.

The bomb and Hizbullah's reaction raised the prospect of a renewal of Katyusha rocket attacks on the Galilee.

At press time, no group had claimed responsibility for the attack.

Reports from Lebanon said the blast occurred in the run-down Bir el-Abed district, a densely populated Shi'ite area controlled by Hizbullah.

According to one of the reports, a car bomb exploded outside a supermarket not far from the local mosque, which is believed to be the headquarters of Hizbullah spiritual leader Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah.

News agencies said another car bomb had been discovered in the area and had been dismantled by Lebanese Army sappers. The reports said armed Hizbullah activists were patrolling the streets and carrying out widespread searches.

Among the dead was Fuad Mughniyeh, owner of the market. The Christian-run Lebanese Broadcasting Corp. said Mughniyeh, 20, was a brother of Imad Mughniyeh, Hizbullah security chief and reputed mastermind of the kidnapping of Western hostages throughout the 1980s.

Meanwhile, Hizbullah denied that its leader, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, had said the organization would stop fighting Israel once it signed a peace treaty with Syria.

A statement said that a news agency report of Nasrallah's comments in the German weekly *Die Zeit* was incorrect and had been taken out of context.

The statement, quoting a senior Hizbullah source, said Nasrallah had been asked the same question on several other occasions and had always given the same answer - that it was too early to say what form the "resistance" would take in the event of a peace treaty between Israel and Syria.

Meanwhile, fighting in southern Lebanon resumed yesterday, after a temporary lull following separate attacks on Monday in which two IDF soldiers were killed.

Reports from Lebanon said gunmen blasted South Lebanese Army positions in the Alnane and Shomirya areas, in the security zone's central sector, with mortar, machine-gun, and light weapons fire.

There were no reports of casualties, and IDF and SLA gunmen returned fire. The Amal Shi'ite movement later claimed responsibility for the attack.

Lt. Col. "A", a battalion commander in the Golani Brigade, told reporters yesterday that although there had been an escalation in the fighting recently, the IDF has not lost its deterrent capability.

He stressed that the troops are as determined as ever to carry out their missions and that they have all the necessary means to do so and to thwart attacks.

"Our confrontation with Hizbullah inside their villages is very difficult, because of our desire not to hit civilians," he said. "But if this continues, I suppose we will act against them inside the villages and inside the homes."

He stressed that despite some of the constraints, the troops are carrying out numerous missions inside the zone.

One of the hardest tasks, however, is to try and comfort bereaved parents. "I don't think there is any explanation one can give to parents who have lost their son. You can explain the contribution he made to enable people to enjoy peace and quiet," he said.

"My own feeling after I left the family of Sgt. Hadar Kehati [killed earlier this week] was that, despite the grief, they understood the mission he fulfilled. I had the feeling when I returned here that they are behind me in continuing the tasks that we have to fulfill."

David Makovsky contributed to this report.

Air force strikes in Lebanon called 'futile'

ALON PINKAS

MOST air force strikes in Lebanon in the past year have been exercises in futility, serving only to instill fear in villages harboring Hizbullah forces, but not deterring or damaging the organization, a senior air force source said yesterday.

The source noted there has been a moderate decline in the frequency of air force sorties in Lebanon in the last several

months, as well as a decline in the tonnage of bombs and number of rockets fired, although the general number of strikes has actually risen.

According to IDF figures, there have been 21 strikes in Lebanon so far in 1994, compared to 16 in 1993 (excluding air activity during Operation

Accountability in July of that year), while in 1992 there were over 20 strikes.

"There are more effective and surgical measures to combat Hizbullah than these strikes, which sometimes cause collateral damage in villages that does the original purpose a disservice," the source said. "Every

strike is described as being against Hizbullah strongholds, but in fact we learned in the past year that their mode of operation uses no fixed bases from which operations are launched or artillery is fired."

The air force often regards strikes in Lebanon against Hizbullah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine as good training for pilots.

Weizman prepared to meet with Assad

BATSHEVA TSUR

PRESIDENT Ezer Weizman yesterday declared his readiness to fly to Damascus to meet President Hafez Assad, if such a move would push peace forward.

"There is no comprehensive peace without Syria," Weizman said. "Assad has reservations because of the peace treaty with Jordan, but that is not productive... I am ready to go and meet him."

Weizman was speaking to reporters at Ben-Gurion Airport on his return from a 48-hour state visit to Egypt, during which he met four times with President Hosni Mubarak. In their discussions, the two reportedly exchanged views on new ways of pushing forward the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, as well as relations with the Palestinians.

One possibility reportedly discussed was the idea of a personal meeting with the Syrian leader. While in Cairo, Weizman had told reporters that new ways of attaining a breakthrough with Damascus were being sought, but he did not elaborate.

Mubarak is expected to meet with Assad and Saudi Arabia's King Fahd next week in Riyadh. However, he told *The Jerusalem Post* that no such meeting had been finalized.

Weizman repeatedly stressed the importance of Egypt's role in giving new momentum to the process. "Mubarak is doing a lot. He sees it as in Egypt's interest to seek a solution with Syria, but that now depends on Assad," he described Syria as "the hardest nut to crack."

Turning to Mubarak's refusal to visit Israel, Weizman said: "I tried to understand Mubarak's refusal without justifying it... We

have to realize how isolated Egypt was for the first seven years after making peace and how icy ties were then."

Meanwhile, Egypt has agreed to renew its search for the 23 IDF soldiers missing in action on Egyptian soil, Weizman said.

He said that his personal aide de camp, Brig.-Gen. Shimon Hefetz, had remained in Cairo to confer with Egyptian military leaders on the subject. "The Egyptians are not making problems about this," Weizman said, "but there is a great deal of bureaucracy involved... We have to remember they have large numbers of MIAs of their own."

During discussions on the Palestinian question, Weizman called on the Egyptians to make every effort to invest in the Palestinian Authority. This is essential to strengthen Yasser Arafat's standing among the more moderate Palestinians, Weizman said to the Egyptian interlocutors.

While Weizman and Mubarak concentrated on the peace process, combating fundamentalist terrorism was reviewed by Foreign Minister Amr Moussa and Foreign Ministry senior deputy director-general Eitan Bentzur. They also discussed outside backing for terrorism.

Weizman, who has from time to time made mention of the need to include all the countries of the region in an eventual peace, told the Egyptians that Israel does not feel itself bound by US policy towards Iraq.

The Egyptians also noted that Libya had recently changed and could possibly be included in the process at a later date.

Ministry admits it keeps marriage blacklist

HAIM SHAPIRO

THE Religious Affairs Ministry has a secret computerized list of 10,000 people who are prohibited from marrying other Jews, according to Jerusalem City Councilwoman Anat Hoffman, who said that she intends to challenge the legality of the list in court.

Hoffman said that the list included about 2,000 people identified as *mamzerim* (offspring of a forbidden union), while the rest were those whose status has to be clarified. That means, she said, their inclusion was based upon rumor, gossip, or malicious reports.

Those included only learned about it when they registered to be married, a step usually only taken shortly before the wedding. Hoffman said she received her information from a clerk in the government computer agency, who knew of the list through her work and felt she could not live with herself if she did not do something about it. Some of the names are young people in school with her children, Hoffman quoted the clerk as saying.

Religious Affairs Ministry Director-General Ze'ev Rosenberg yesterday admitted that the list exists, but said that it contains no more than 4,000 names. Rosenberg told Israel Radio that those on the list learn they are included "when it becomes necessary for them to do so."

"We are talking about 4,000 people, most with small problems... only the minority of the minority are really big tragedies," Sephardic Chief Rabbi Eliahu Bakshi-Doron told Israel Radio.

Also speaking on the radio was a mother of nine who said that her son had been told that he was a *mamzer* when he applied to marry at the rabbinate. The woman, who

said that hers was a religious family, said that her older daughter had been married by a rabbi.

To protect the woman and her family, Israel Radio did not disclose her identity or why her children are considered *mamzerim*.

In a related case, a rabbinical court in Tiberias annulled the 12-year marriage of Shoshana Hadad, because one of her ancestors, a *cohen*, had married a divorcee 2,500 years ago. According to the court, no member of the Hadad clan can ever marry a *cohen*.

Hoffman said that the existence of the list contravened the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Freedom, and that not only is the list illegal, but also the fact that those included are not informed of this. People, she said, have a right to see their income tax file, their police record, and their Kipat Holim files, and she would like to see every concerned citizen apply to the ministry to see if his name is on the list.

"We demand a response from the prime minister... to explain why in the state of Israel there are people without the most basic right of raising a family," said Ofra Friedman, director of Na'amat, which had made public the Hadad case.

She said that those who are really concerned about the purity of their families, the *haredim*, do not trust the ministry in any case and keep their own lists.

Rabbi Ehud Bandel, spokesman for Hemdat, the Council for Freedom of Science, Religion, and Culture, said that there are halachic solutions to the problems of those prohibited from marrying other Jews. However, he said, the religious establishment has refrained from using these solutions.

Yatom in Washington for talks with Syria

DAVID MAKOVSKY

MAJ.-GEN. Danny Yatom, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's military aide, arrived in Washington yesterday to participate in quiet peace talks with Syria, sources say.

An unknown high-ranking Syrian military officer is expected to arrive today.

It would mark the first time mili-

tary officers from both countries are joining talks headed by Israeli Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich and his Syrian counterpart Walid Mualem, along with US special Middle East peace coordinator Dennis Ross. The talks, orchestrated by the Clinton administration, could begin either today or tomorrow.

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Zissman rebels, helps pass increase in absorption basket

ABSORPTION Committee chairman Emanuel Zissman joined the opposition yesterday in passing a law increasing the absorption basket paid to new immigrants during their first six months here, over the objections of Finance Minister Avraham Shohat.

The law was passed 30-0, with two abstentions. Zissman was the only member of the coalition to vote for the bill.

Zissman's decision to put the bill to a vote was the first revolt by a coalition member against party discipline regarding the 1995 budget, which is to be presented for final reading next week. The bill will cost the Treasury an estimated NIS 117 million.

The brief plenum debate capped a day of feverish negotiations during which Shohat tried to persuade Zissman to shelve the bill. Zissman rejected Shohat's offer to add NIS 70m. to the Absorption Ministry budget in 1995 and an additional NIS 25m. in 1996.

DAN IZENBERG

According to MK Benny Temkin (Meretz), Shohat's offer included NIS 25m. for the absorption basket (a 5% increase) this year, with the other NIS 45m. going for other absorption projects. The basket would have been increased by another 5% in 1996.

In 1989, when the absorption basket was first introduced, it stood at NIS 21,000. It was later cut by 25% and currently stands at NIS 17,000. The money is given to new immigrants to cover their financial needs for the first six months.

Zissman said his committee had sought an improvement of the basket for the past two years, but Shohat had not kept his promises. "For two years, we waited patiently," he said.

Zissman also accused Shohat of only being prepared to consider increasing the absorption budget at the last minute, and only because his bill was about to be

passed into law.

Shohat warned that he would finance the bill from the 1995 Absorption Ministry budget reserve, so that in effect the ministry would not receive an agora more than has already been allocated to it. He also reminded the Likud and NRP MKs that it was their government which had cut the original basket by 25% and caused a further 7% loss by linking the basket to the cost-of-living index instead of the inflation rate.

"We were the ones who increased the basket by 5% and put the linkage on a proper footing," he said.

Temkin accused Zissman and the opposition of "robbing the immigrants of NIS 95m." He said the government offer of NIS 95m. was over and above the current budget and would have provided extra money for immigrants already here for a host of different projects, instead going solely to the absorption basket of those who arrive after January 1.



Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat shake hands yesterday at their Gaza meeting. (Reuters)

Saudia's top cleric sanctions visits to Jerusalem

DUBAI (Reuters) - Saudi Arabia's top Muslim cleric says that Moslem Arabs may visit and worship at Al-Aksa Mosque if they are able to undertake the pilgrimage.

Sheikh Abdul-Aziz Bin Baz, the mufti of Saudi Arabia and president of its Higher Council of Ulama, was asked by the daily al-Muslimum if Moslems could visit the shrine, now that Arabs and Jews were being reconciled, a reference to the Middle East peace process.

In a written reply obtained by Reuters, the newspaper says will be published tomorrow, the senior Saudi divine referred to the Sunna - the acts and words of Islam's Prophet Mohammed who all Moslems are supposed to emulate.

"Visiting and praying at Al-Aksa Mosque is [required] in the Sunna if the circumstances allow it," he said in a reference to the prophet's saying that Moslems should visit three mosques - the grand mosques of Mecca and Medina and Jerusalem's Al-Aksa.

Bethlehem this year will reach around one million.

Yasser Arafat and his Christian wife, Suha, were not among this year's visitors. Freij said he does not believe the PLO chairman will come.

"Before Arafat can attend the Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem, he must visit the Moslem holy shrines in Jerusalem," Freij said. He does not expect other members of the PA to show up, either.

A member of the Palestinian Preventive Security Service in Jericho said Arafat could not attend the celebrations as long as the Israelis are in charge of security there.

Soldiers began arriving at Manger Square yesterday to set up electronic equipment for security arrangements in front of the Church of the Nativity. "The Israelis have been doing this for the last 27 years. Until there will be redeployment they will continue to be in charge of security," said Freij.

Soldier disciplined for insulting Ahmed Tibi at checkpoint

ALON PINKAS

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's special adviser, Dr. Ahmed Tibi, was subjected to verbal abuse by an IDF soldier at a checkpoint yesterday, when he was on his way to Arafat's meeting with Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in the Gaza Strip.

The incident occurred in the morning at a roadblock at the A-Ram junction north of Jerusalem. According to an army investigation, Tibi, an Israeli citizen, was asked by a soldier whether he "was going to meet the murderer."

In a complaint he filed later,

Tibi said he was held for an hour at the roadblock.

An army investigation, conducted by the company commander in charge of the area, noted that settlers had also arrived at the scene and heckled Tibi.

Tibi said the soldier not only verbally abused him, but spat on his car before allowing him to leave.

The IDF Spokesman said the army views the incident as very serious. The soldier was tried yesterday by a senior officer and sentenced to 21 days in jail, suspended.

Shohat plans home purchase tax cut for low-income groups

JOSE ROSENFELD

RECOGNIZING that the state housing assistance low-income groups receive should not subsidize the tax collector, Finance Minister Avraham Shohat yesterday proposed to reduce purchase tax for such people by NIS 3,000 for a NIS 300,000 apartment.

The reform will affect about 30,000 families a year, including 17,000-18,000 young couples, Deputy Income Tax Commissioner Dov Shtaub said. The tax reduction will affect all of those that are entitled to Housing Ministry assistance.

Currently, the purchase tax on housing for an apartment is 0.5 percent up to NIS 182,000, 3.5% up to NIS 452,000, and 4.5% for housing that costs more than that.

Under the reform, assistance recipients, who are entitled to NIS 100,000 in grants or subsidized loans, will pay 0.5% up to a ceiling of NIS 282,000. Even if

they do not use all of their entitlement, the recipients will benefit from the higher ceiling.

For example, if someone buys today an apartment for NIS 300,000, he will pay a purchase tax of NIS 5,018; under the reform, he will only pay NIS 2,018.

This new tax cut comes on top of existing benefits provided to new immigrants, the handicapped, parents and children of war victims, persecution victims, and people living in development areas. These groups qualify for a 0.5% tax with no ceiling on the purchase price of housing.

Asked for the rationale for the change, Shtaub replied, "we tried to respond to complaints that the Treasury always takes back the assistance which the Housing Ministry provides."

Shohat's proposal, which must be approved by the Knesset Finance Committee, is expected to be implemented on January 1.

Labor fails to pass bill restricting PLO in capital

Arab parties call for no-confidence vote

DAN IZENBERG

ON its way to trying to pass three bills paving the way for the implementation of the Gaza/Jericho Agreement, the Labor Party forgot one small detail: even after the addition of two Yit'ud MKs, it still needs the Arab parties for its blocking majority.

As a result, the government passed only two of the bills, dealing with the judicial and economic aspects of the Gaza/Jericho Accords, but supported the third one restricting PLO activity in Israel.

Likud MKs Eitan, Limor Livnat and David Mena prepared dozens of alternative proposals to the first two bills and declared that they would hold an all-night filibuster. In order to impose some sort of time limit on the debate, Dayan and Eitan struck a deal: they agreed to hold a debate on the first two bills in which each opponent of the legislation could speak at length. On the other hand, since the Likud supported the bill restricting the PLO, they decided to limit debate on that bill by allocating a total of 10 minutes speaking time to each faction.

The smaller parties, including the DFPE and the DAP, were not consulted on the decision. Since the two Arab parties were the only sworn opponents of the bill, they felt cheated.

"I want to know according to what paragraph of the House Rules am I denied the right to explain all my alternative proposals," said Tamar Gozanski (DFPE). "I insist on the right to explain every one of them today or whenever the bill is discussed. Any procedure decided upon without the consent of all the factions is illegal."

Nevertheless, the fracas between Labor and the Arab parties was an unpleasant incident which may have future consequences. Moreover, it could have been avoided had Labor faction chairman Eli Dayan thought about them.

Dayan and Likud MK Michael Eitan met Tuesday night to work out the voting procedures for the three bills. The Likud opposed the two proposals dealing with the economic and judicial aspects of the Gaza/Jericho Accords, but supported the third one restricting PLO activity in Israel.

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DAP faction chairman Abdul Wahab Darawshe said the Labor-Likud deal "showed contempt for the small parties."

In introducing the bill, Law Committee Chairman Dedi Zucker (Meretz) said the committee had added an introductory paragraph to the original government legislation to bring it in line with restrictions on foreign organizations in other democracies. "For example, we are following in the footsteps of a country like the United States which determined that the activities of any element defined as an agent of a foreign government must receive permission from the American government," said Zucker.

According to another change introduced by the committee, Palestinians will be able to petition directly to the High Court of Justice instead of the district court against government decisions denying them permission to conduct a specific activity.

Uzi Landau (Likud) said the law was not necessary to prevent PLO activity in Jerusalem. "There is no problem to fight against such activity based on the existing law," he said. "But [the government] does not want to fight against this activity using existing legislation because it does not want to fight against this activity at all."

During the early morning hours, the Knesset approved the Gaza/Jericho Implementation Law (Economic Arrangements) by a vote of 45-14, and the Gaza/Jericho Implementation Law (Judicial Arrangements) by a vote of 46-13.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Suspected collaborator murdered

A Baka al-Sharqiya gas station owner, suspected of collaborating with the authorities, was shot to death yesterday. Ayad Ahmed Sa'ad, 42, was at the station when masked men entered and shot him. He died on the way to the hospital in Tulkarm.

Itim

Man killed in hit-and-run incident

Ephraim Ackerman, 83, of Holon, was killed by a hit-and-run driver yesterday morning while crossing Rehov Sokolov in Holon. Police are asking anyone with information to call (03) 512-4613/4.

Itim

Palestinian parley barred from capital

The Prime Minister's Office has ordered police not to allow a conference of the Palestinian development group PECDAR to take place in Jerusalem today, a police spokesman said last night.

The government banned the conference saying it is a function of the Palestinian Authority that under the Cairo accord may only be held in Gaza or Jericho.

Winning cards

In yesterday's Mifal Hapayis daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the jack of spades, seven of hearts, king of diamonds, and queen of clubs.

Court frees Meshulam follower

RAINE MARCUS

THE Supreme Court yesterday upheld an appeal by one of Uzi Meshulam's followers, and ordered the release of Ora Shifris, who had acted as his spokeswoman.

Shifris was arrested when she and others ran riot in Tel Aviv District Court, during Monday's session of the trial of Meshulam and his followers.

Justices Gabriel Bach, Yitzhak Zamir and Zvi Tal ordered Shifris' immediate release on the grounds of illegal arrest. Her attorney, Yossi Zilberberg said that any attempt by police to take his client down to the cells to fill in release forms would be considered an arrest.

Palestinian flag to fly over Bethlehem celebrations

LAMIA LAHOUD

FOR the first time, a Palestinian minister of tourism is in charge of Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem. But nothing has changed to make this year's Christmas special, said Mayor Elias Freij, who also holds the Palestinian Authority's tourism portfolio.

"However, this year the Israelis will allow us to fly the Palestinian flag over the municipality, since the building also houses the offices of the Tourism Ministry," he said. Last year soldiers removed the Palestinian flag from the municipality and almost clashed with Fatah activists who

tried to put it back.

Tourism is one of the five spheres of early empowerment transferred to the Palestinians in the territories. However, the preparations for Christmas and the decorations are paid for and put up by the municipality, said Freij.

He says the PA has no money to spend and the Tourism Ministry has almost no budget.

"I am traveling around trying to convince governments to invest in tourism here, but I cannot even guarantee them a permit for building a hotel or other facilities, because the Israelis are still in charge of planning," he said.

Freij expects several thousand visitors for Christmas and said the total number of tourists to

CORRECTION

The name of Yair Levy's lawyer in the picture on Page 12 of yesterday's paper is Jacob Rubin, and not as printed.

With deep sorrow, we announce the death of our dear husband, father and grandfather

BARUCH (Bernard) BEDROCK ז"ל

The funeral will take place at the Zukei Yam Section in the Avihail Regional Cemetery, on Hashomer Street in Avihail, today, Thursday, December 22, 1994, at 3:00 p.m.

A bus will leave at 2:30 p.m. from Fingerhart, 17 Ussishkin St., Netanya.

Zipora Bedrock
Linda and Al Wasserman
Bonnie and Mickey Simone
Bella Dworsky
Ben and Jo Beth Dworsky
David Dworsky
Rafi and Susan Dworsky
Danny (Bedrock) Dworsky
and Zohar Eviatar
Robert and Tracy Anker
Noa Simone
Jesse William Ruffo
Maya and Joey Dworsky

With deep sorrow, we mourn the passing of our beloved wife, mother and grandmother

MINNIE GOLOMBICK

May her dear soul rest in peace.

Her husband, Louis

Sons, daughters-in-law, and grandchildren

Prayers will be held at Kibbutz Gal-Ed.

With deep sorrow, we announce the passing in Los Angeles of our beloved cousin

HARRY KAGAN ז"ל

who was like a brother to us.

We extend our deepest condolences to

His wife, Esther
His sons, Morris Kagan
Dr. Samuel Kagan
Dr. Lee Kagan
and families
and the Woods Family

Dr. Elyahu Yones
Eliezer Yones
and families
Jerusalem, December 1994

Our beloved **RUHAMA MELTZER**

Widow of the late J.L. Meltzer

passed away on December 20, 1994
The funeral will leave from the Sanhedria Funeral Parlor today, Thursday, December 22, at 2 p.m., for the Mount of Olives Cemetery.

Ariel, Harry, and Sigla Stern
Lena Meltzer and Family
Shiva at 7 Leib Yaffe St., Talpiot, Jerusalem.

مكتبة الجليل

NEWS IN BRIEF

Baby flown to NY for surgery

A week-old boy, born in Jerusalem with transposition of the great arteries, has been flown to New York for emergency surgery upon recommendation from doctors at Shaare Zedek Hospital. This rare type of operation is performed here, but with much lower success rates than abroad, doctors said. The parents, Miriam and Ephraim Nafali, have opened a bank account to accept donations for the surgery, which costs \$50,000, at Bank Discount, branch 158, account 8889.

Eban loses law suit in US

Abba Eban has lost a week-long trial in which he sought financial compensation for a broken hip he sustained in a fall nearly two years ago. As reported in the *Jewish Bulletin of Northern California*, the lawsuit stemmed from Eban's speaking engagement in January 1993 at the San Mateo Performing Arts Center. After finishing his speech, Eban walked off the temporary platform, which stood eight inches above the floor, fell and broke his hip.

Tom Tugend

Man held for impersonating psychologist

A Kiryat Bialik man, 53, was arrested yesterday on suspicion of impersonating a psychologist and causing emotional damage to people who came to him for treatment. The Haifa Magistrate's Court remanded the man for 10 days and ordered him to undergo psychiatric observation. A Haifa fraud squad detective testified that the suspect had been in business for a long time, and had even advertised his services in the yellow pages.

Itim

DNA traces to help unravel Dead Sea Scrolls

Jerusalem Post Staff

ANIMAL DNA traces discovered on the Dead Sea Scrolls could help determine their origins and piece together tens of thousands of manuscript fragments, scientists said yesterday.

Patricia Smith, an anthropology professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, said recent research showed the genetic code of skins used for the ancient manuscripts had been preserved for millennia.

"We can now take a small piece of tissue from a document... and identify whether goat, sheep, calf, or ibex were used to make it," Smith told the

Associated Press.

Adolfo Roitman, curator of the Israel Museum where some of the scrolls are on display, said the finding could be a revolutionary aid to researchers struggling to reconstruct the documents found in the Qumran caves by the Dead Sea in 1947.

Some 800 texts have been identified so far, but only about half the work has been completed, Roitman said.

Smith, who is working on the project with Scott Woodward, a visiting molecular biologist from Brigham Young University, said identifying all the animal skins should take three years.

Police find weapons cache in village raid near Hebron

BILL HUTMAN

A CACHE of stolen weapons and ammunition were found by police late Tuesday night in a raid on a home in the village of Fawaz, just south of Hebron.

Six brothers and sisters were detained, including the 27-year-old brother who is the prime suspect, a Judea District police spokesman said.

The raid took place after police received a tip that the 27-year-

old, previously arrested in connection with car thefts, was now dealing also in stolen and homemade weapons.

Two Kalashnikov assault rifles, a hunting rifle, a homemade pistol and over 150 bullets were found in the home.

Police had yet to determine from where the weapons were stolen, or if they were earmarked for use in a terror attack.

Man remanded for attempt to smuggle out \$1 million

BILL HUTMAN

A MAN detained at Ben-Gurion Airport Monday with \$1 million in gold and cash he was allegedly trying to smuggle out of the country, was remanded for 10 days by Jerusalem Magistrate's Court yesterday.

The suspect, David Sterling, 40, of Jerusalem, had hidden \$700,000 cash and 3.5 kg. of gold in a carry-on bag, between his prayer book and tefillin case, police said.

Police sources said that investigators believe the cash and gold

were obtained illegally. The sources declined, however, to give more details on grounds it would be damaging to the investigation.

Police rejected Sterling's claim he had brought the \$1m. into the country to purchase an apartment in Beitar Ilit, but that the deal had fallen through.

Sterling holds Danish citizenship. He was about to go on a flight to Switzerland, when stopped by detectives at the airport.

Kibbutznik hits Lotto jackpot

A KIBBUTZNIK from the Galilee won this week's record NIS 18 million Lotto jackpot.

"I was on my way to Tel Aviv, when I stopped in Zichron Ya'akov and bought a Lottomatic ticket for NIS 13," the man, 40, said yesterday. "I didn't attach any great importance to it, because I buy a similar ticket every week."

"I watched the drawing on television, and jumped for joy when I saw I had all the numbers. I told

my best friend, and we took the bus to Tel Aviv together to collect the money."

"I didn't sleep all night. I still don't know what I'm going to do with the money, but I will certainly continue with my regular life. But maybe I'll take a trip around the world."

Three people split the second prize, each receiving NIS 108,344.60.

Transport Ministry to invest NIS 500m. in capital's roads

BILL HUTMAN

SOME NIS 500 million is to be invested in Jerusalem road construction over the next three to four years, Transport Minister Yisrael Kessar announced yesterday at the inauguration of the new French Hill interchange.

Kessar said the new roads would both ease traffic congestion and strengthen Israel's control of the capital by putting facts on the ground, which make clear to the Palestinians Israel will not give up control of the city.

"We all know what we have to do to make sure the united Jerusalem remains the eternal capital of Israel," Kessar said.

The sum constitutes about 20 percent of the Transport Ministry's budget in the coming years, Kessar said.

The budget does not include the still undecided eastern beltway project, ministry officials said. A final decision whether to go through with the controversial project is expected early next year, they said.

Municipal officials have charged the government is holding up the beltway out of concern for its political ramifications.

The ministry officials, however, said it has yet to be determined whether the project is cost effective, particularly given the new interchange, the first stage which was officially opened yesterday.

"I have no doubt that the inter-

change will considerably improve the flow of traffic, but it is not the complete answer," said Mayor Ehud Olmert.

Olmert confirmed yesterday's Post report that the Finance Ministry had not agreed to fund a nearby highway project, the proposed Mount Scopus tunnel, the city views as vital to easing traffic in north Jerusalem.

Olmert vowed that the municipality would continue to lobby for the project, and if necessary go to "other sources (than the Treasury) for the necessary funds."

Municipal officials said that city hoped that the Transport

Ministry would push through the project.

Olmert, meanwhile, said the city would implement measures to ease the noise problems the new overpass causes nearby French Hill residents. "Our experts and their experts have met and come up with reasonable solutions," he said.

However, opening of the bridge could not have been held up because of the pressing traffic problems in north Jerusalem, Olmert said.

About a dozen neighborhood residents demonstrated at the ceremony, shouting slogans condemning the city for allegedly breaking its promise to first solve the noise problems before allowing traffic on the bridge.



An aerial view of Jerusalem's French Hill interchange, which opened yesterday.

Herzliya planning head remanded on bribery charges

RAINE MARCUS

THE head of Herzliya's building and planning division, suspected of accepting bribes from building contractors, was remanded for seven days by Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Victor Mesika, 47, was arrested on Tuesday together with Kfar Shmaryahu building contractor Emil Abramov. Abramov was released on bail and did not appear in court.

According to Supl. Atalia

Arad, Mesika turned a blind eye to building irregularities, gave advice to contractors on how to "cut corners," and issued building permits contrary to regulations. In return, said Arad, he received money and favors from contractors in Herzliya and Kfar Shmaryahu.

Mesika also allegedly lied in another court case and destroyed

municipality files.

Mesika, who had previously been a municipal building supervisor for 20 years, maintained his innocence, and asked to be released on bail or placed under house arrest.

But Arad argued that police still have to question scores of additional contractors and others suspected of bribing Mesika.

Mesika's brothers, Aharon, 42, and Shimon, 39, also appeared in the same court yesterday, suspected of defrauding tax authorities out of hundreds of thousands of shekels over four years.

The two, who own a garage in Herzliya, were remanded for three days. Tax investigator Yo-sef Spiro said in court that there was a connection between the offenses and those allegedly committed by Victor Mesika.

Haifa firms charged with polluting Kishon

LIAT COLLINS

THE ISRAELI Union for Environmental Defense and several fishing companies yesterday filed a criminal complaint in Haifa Magistrate's Court against polluters of the Kishon River.

The complaint says Haifa Chemicals Ltd. and Deshenim, Fertilizers and Chemical Materials Ltd. have been dumping solid waste and waste water into the river in violation of the Pollution Prevention and Water laws.

The Kishon, the third largest river in the country, passes the Haifa industrial area, where several companies pour their waste water, including hazardous and poisonous materials, into it. Greenpeace last month declared it one of the most polluted rivers in the western world.

The companies have yet to file their responses, but Haifa Chemical officials did not deny that its waste water flows into the Kishon, though they said they are working with the Environment Ministry and authorities to build a pipeline which would transport the waste to the sea.

The steering committee established to supervise the project said it had recommended the pipeline be constructed on condition that pollution from it did not spread beyond a 200-meter radius and that the company prepare an environmental impact study by April 1994. The study was never done.

Deshenim is accused of illegally dumping polluted waste into Nahal Zippori, a tributary of the Kishon, as well as the river.

Overheating said to be factor in sudden crib deaths

JUDY SIEGEL

BABIES' rooms should not be heated above 24 degrees as overheating is one of the risk factors in sudden infant crib death (SIDS), according to a Technion sleep expert.

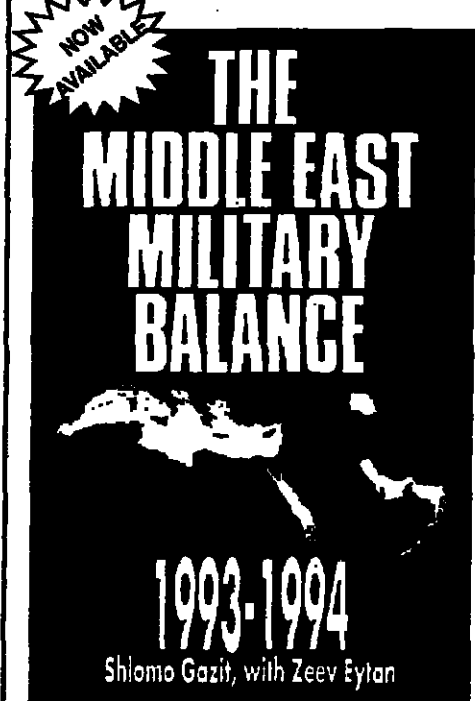
Dr. Giora Pilar, of the Technion's sleep lab, made his recommendation at a Tel Aviv University seminar on pediatric sleep disturbances on Tuesday.

Pilar said research has found a link between sleep apnea (temporary cessation of breathing during sleep) and SIDS. Half of all crib

death victims, he said, previously suffered from incidents of insufficient oxygenation; this is most dangerous when the baby stops breathing for over 10 seconds or "skips" three breaths. But in many cases, he said, the baby's breathing was normal before the tragedy occurs.

The Middle East Military Balance 1993-1994 comprises approx. 500 pages with appendices and maps. It is edited by Major (General) (res) Shlomo Gazit, a former head of IDF Intelligence and currently a senior research associate at the Jaffee Center. Hardcover.

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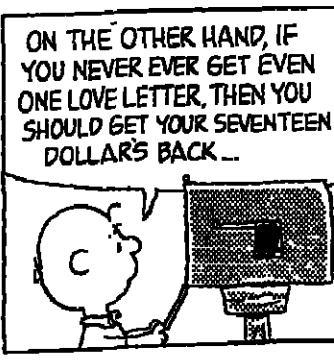
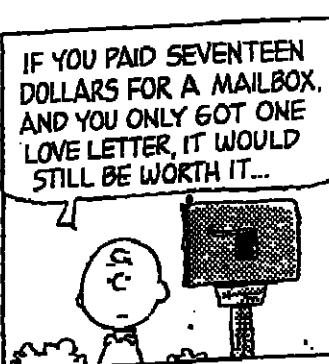
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SCHOLARSHIPS

Chechens running out of ammunition

GROZNY (AP) — Chechen anti-aircraft guns fell silent yesterday after ammunition ran low, allowing Russian jets to bomb the capital of the break-away southern republic in early morning raids.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev acknowledged that the Kremlin's offensive in Chechnya was going "more slowly than we would like," attributing it to the need to minimize civilian casualties.

On the 11th day of the offensive, Russian President Boris Yeltsin appealed to the Chechen people to lay down their arms and assured them that they will never again be deported, dismissing such talk as "malicious rumors."

In Grozny, volunteers stacked sandbags in the ground-floor windows of the presidential building, where the Chechen military command is located. Russian artillery boomed in the distance from the outskirts of the capital, Grozny.

Despite shortages and freezing temperatures, morale was strong among the poorly equipped fighters loyal to Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev.

"We're going to fight until a green (Chechen) flag flies over Moscow," said 33-year-old Rashid Baziev, climbing down from the back of a truck with about 20 other fighters on the icy road between Grozny and the town of Argun.

The fighters, shouldering assault rifles, light anti-tank weapons and grenade launchers, had been told to dismount from the truck because of periodic air attacks. A Russian jet could be heard somewhere above the low clouds and falling snow.

"I have just one grenade, which I'm saving for the Russian spetsnaz (special forces)," Baziev said.



Russian soldiers dig in in Chechnya.

Russia sent an estimated 10,000 to 40,000 troops into Chechnya on Dec. 11 to oust Dudayev and disarm his supporters.

Chechnya declared independence in 1991, a move Russia has rejected.

Chechnya claims hundreds of civilians have been killed. Moscow has not given an overall casualty count for its troops, although Russian lawmaker Valentin Kovalyov said 11 soldiers were killed, seven injured and five missing from fighting near the village of Petropavlovskoye Tuesday night, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported.

Russian artillery shelled Chechen positions several kms north of Grozny, but there was no evidence of Russian claims that they had encircled the city.

There was no sign of Russian troops south of Grozny yesterday. Journalists still travel in and out through Dagestan to the east. A pro-Dudayev checkpoint was still waving down cars with flashlights about 30 km east of Grozny, although most blockades along the road were unmanned.

In Moscow, the Russian government accused mercenaries from Azerbaijan, Afghanistan and Ukraine of "extreme cruelty" and "bloody atrocities" in Chechnya.

It warned that their actions in support of Chechen fighters "may complicate relations between Russia and countries where mercenaries continue to arrive from."

A day after Russia closed its borders with Georgia and Azerbaijan to contain the conflict, Moscow's Ostankino television

said border guards had turned away at least 6,000 people from those countries — many of them armed mercenaries — who wanted to enter Chechnya.

Many residents of the mountainous republic of 1.2 million people, however, want to get out to avoid the hostilities.

Russian migration officials said yesterday that nearly 1,800 people had left Chechnya in the previous 24 hours, and a total of more than 15,000 refugees had applied for relief aid in neighboring regions.

Berlusconi keeps nation guessing

ROME (Reuters) — Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, his government set to fall in a no-confidence debate after a mutiny by his Northern League coalition partner, called yesterday for a snap general election if he is ousted.

Addressing parliament at the start of a rowdy debate expected to lead to his resignation, Berlusconi accused the League's abrasive Umberto Bossi of defrauding voters who elected the "Freedom Alliance" coalition only last March.

"Only a government wanted by Italians, and not built on machinations and stealing votes can complete the job we have just begun to carry out," the billionaire media tycoon said.

"If this governing majority falls apart, we must decisively and calmly go back to the voters and ask their opinion," he told the 630-member Chamber of Deputies (lower house).

Berlusconi, catapulted to power in the March elections in alliance with the League and the hard right National Alliance, later told reporters he would decide whether to resign after listening to a debate that is set to last for up to two days.

It was not clear whether Berlusconi would wait for a vote before offering his resignation, now seen as a virtual certainty, or jump before he is forced out.

Berlusconi launched a fierce attack on federalist League leader Bossi, accusing him of sabotaging the government with a flood of criticism since its appointment last May.

"For seven long months, the honourable Bossi has sorely tried not only my patience but that of the whole government," the media magnate said.

Berlusconi supporters clapped and chanted "Italia, Italia (Italy, Italy)" after the prime minister's 30-minute speech.

Two members of Berlusconi's Forza Italia party were suspended from the tense assembly, one for brandishing a sign at League deputies with "Vote Robbers" written on it.

Bossi has sponsored a no-confidence motion in Berlusconi's government with the opposition centrist Popular Party (PPI).

Two similar motions have been presented by the main leftist opposition parties in a drive to oust Berlusconi and replace his government with a broad-based administration of institutional reform to lead Italy out of its current crisis.

They want to draw up new voting rules and curb rights of television ownership to halt what they say has been Berlusconi's abuse of his private media for political ends.

"You're not the state... I ask what right do you have to bang your fists on the table saying that you cannot be replaced," Bossi told the Chamber in a reply to Berlusconi.

"You're not the man of providence," added Bossi, who had earlier told television he expected the current parliament to last for a long time even if Berlusconi fell.

Bossi's campaign has run into opposition from a small group of his 103 deputies, including leading League moderate Roberto Maroni, the current Interior Minister.

But Maroni was unimpressed by what the prime minister said.

"If the speech by Berlusconi had a political result, it was to have reunited the League," he said.

Even Berlusconi loyalists admitted the government was in its death throes. "There is no alternative but to go back to the polls," said National Alliance leader Gianfranco Fini.

Carter announces Bosnia cease-fire

SARAJEVO (AP) — Ignoring a tentative agreement for a holiday cease-fire, Bosnian Serbs and their allies attacked a government-held enclave in northwestern Bosnia, UN officials said yesterday.

After two days of diplomacy, former US President Jimmy Carter said the warring sides supported a temporary truce, starting today.

"My hope is that we can soon have a cease-fire, the total disengagement of military forces... all these things have been promised by both sides," he told

reporters in Belgrade, the Serbian capital.

Senior UN officials were meeting in Zagreb, Croatia on Carter's accomplishments. And in Sarajevo, UN spokesman Alexander Ivanko said his visit resulted in a "certain momentum for peace."

But fighting continued even as Carter left on his way home.

UN officials in Sarajevo said hard-pressed government troops and mostly Moslem civilians in the northwestern Bihac pocket remained under attack late Tuesday, in the continuous

tion of a Serb offensive that began Nov. 5.

Fighting eased yesterday, due to regional snow storms, said Bosnian radio. But Lt. Col. Gary Coward, a UN spokesman called Tuesday "probably the worst day in Bihac thus far, at least in the recent past."

He said two or three makeshift missiles, packing 250 kg bombs as war heads, hit Bihac. Those mortar and artillery rounds resulted in at least 13 wounded, he told reporters. Bosnian radio said five people died and 47 were wounded.

Serb snipers killed an 81-year-old man in Sarajevo Tuesday. But world attention remained on the fight for Bihac, where outgunned government troops are defending 70,000 people trapped in the city and its environs. Fighting in the area intensified on Monday after a weekend lull.

Carter announced the planned cease-fire Tuesday after a second day of talks in Pale with the Bosnian Serbs, and in Sarajevo with the government.

New York black veterans make friendly gesture to Salute to Israel parade

MARILYN HENRY
NEW YORK

AN African-American veterans group, delighted with the chance to show conviviality in black-Jewish relations, has yielded its place on Fifth Avenue to the Jews for the annual Salute to Israel parade.

A dozen members of the 369th Veterans Association, led by NY Democratic Congressman Charles Rangel, said yesterday the group will change the date of its annual parade to accommodate the Israel parade.

That gesture resolves a scheduling dilemma that had pitted the parade against New York's annual Holocaust commemoration. The parade, a project of the American Zionist Youth Foundation (AZYF) that draws thousands of participants from synagogues, youth organizations and Jewish schools, parade will take place next May 21. It was originally scheduled for April 30.

That date was bound to the anniversary of Israel's indepen-

dence and the American academic calendar as well as to the halachic limits on celebrations during the period between Passover and Shavuot. April 30 was chosen because it is rosh hashod, which would allow Orthodox groups to participate.

The New York Holocaust commemoration was also scheduled for April 30. The American Gathering/Federation of Holocaust Survivors would not change the date of its event, which for some three decades has been held on the Sunday closest to Yom Hashoah, which falls on April 27 this year.

Julius Berman, chairman of AZYF, then suggested a compromise that called for both events to be held on the same day. In a letter, Berman proposed that the American Gathering could lead the parade, and

"thereby thematically focus upon the transition from the Shoah to the Gvurah of the establishment of the State of Israel."

However, the survivors' group rejected the offer. "It would be a shame, and show disrespect for our kesholim if, on the day of our annual, collective Yizkor, the 'dancing and music of a festive parade filled the air,'" Benjamin Meed, president of the American Gathering, wrote to Berman. There were also not-so-subtle hints that survivors might try to physically block the parade marchers.

Against that backdrop, the AZYF decided to change the date, saying it wanted "to avoid an unseemly and unfortunate rift" in the Jewish community. However, the organization noted, it was losing "a singular opportunity to link the profound

tragedy of our past with the miracle of our present and future."

Some halachic maneuvering allowed a shortened mourning period between the festivals, which in turn allowed the parade organizers to change the date.

That left the competition for Fifth Avenue, New York premier parade route.

"We think that brotherhood and harmony should prevail," Samuel W. Phillips, the veterans' association president, said in announcing the changed date for his parade. "This is a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate racial cooperation."

In their suit armory in Harlem, with their arms around leaders of AZYF, members of the 369th announced that the veterans will march on May 7, with a contingent from the Israel parade among their ranks. And the veterans expect to march again on May 21, in the Israel parade.

Ex-US sec'y of state Dean Rusk, 85

ATHENS, Ga. (AP) — Former US Secretary of State Dean Rusk, who went "eyeball to eyeball" with Moscow during the Cuban missile crisis and helped oversee America's ill-fated buildup in Vietnam, has died. He was 85.

Rusk, the son of a poor Georgia farmer who became the nation's highest Cabinet officer in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations in the 1960s, died Tuesday night at his home in Athens, the University of Georgia said yesterday.

He taught at the university's law school after leaving Washing-

ton in 1969 and had been in declining health for several years.

Rusk was appointed secretary of state by President John F. Kennedy in 1961, enforcing the young president's Cold War policy of containing communism. After Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, President Lyndon Johnson insisted Rusk stay on, and Rusk remained secretary until the end of Johnson's term in 1969, despite criticism for Vietnam.

He was in office during the 1967 Six Day War and made serious but unsuccessful efforts to stop UN Secretary General U Thant from withdrawing UN

forces in Sinai as demanded by Egypt's Gamel Abdel Nasser, a key trigger of the war.

Former US Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, who served with Rusk and was also vilified over Vietnam, praised him as "the most selfless, devoted servant of our nation that I've ever known."

In his eight years as secretary, Rusk presided over four major global events: the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban missile crisis, the signing of a nuclear non-proliferation treaty with the Soviet Union and the Vietnam War.



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AFTER a mind-boggling round of internal wrangling over which car should be chosen, the Peugeot 605 was recently selected the official staff car of IDF generals, winning a public tender which dragged on for more than two years.

The argument over whether the car was too luxurious for the tender reached new heights in proving Parkinson's Law on bureaucracy, that the smaller the decision, the greater the argument. "We can buy a million-dollar guided missile with less fuss," a Defense Ministry official complained.

In the end, the Prime Minister and Defense Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, had to personally intervene in the arguments and busy himself with automobile specifications.

The Peugeot 605 2,000-cc. turbo was eventually chosen over the Mazda 626, the Toyota Carina, the Lancia Thema, the Volkswagen Passat, the Mitsubishi Galant and the Honda Accord.

MOTORING
JOEL GORDIN

The endless public wrangling removed much of the prestige which should have gone to the 605 for winning the tender.

The winner is the facelifted, revamped version of the 605 which was launched in 1989 and established itself as a leading "executive-family" class car, in France, in much of Europe and here. The newer version was put on the roads two months ago.

On the outside, the front grill was modernized and the trunk fashionably rounded. Trendy colors like volcanic red, pearl blue and metallic grey were added to the range. The length was increased by 4 cm, on the old 2.80 m. wheelbase, adding to the leg space.

Small details were improved, like the switches for the power windows, which were moved from the inside of the doors to a console between the seats.

The shift stick - even on automatic shift versions - was made sportier and the standards of internal luxury were upgraded and perfected. The doors, for example, open and close without a creak.

Safety features including an air bag were added, increasing the

car's weight to quite a heavy 1,440 kg.

However, the engine received a boost to allow it to carry the extra kilograms with ease. The engine is even more powerful in the turbo version, the car I tested and the one which will soon be seen in the "reserved" parking spaces of IDF headquarters.

A turbocharger is an air pump that is designed to utilize some of the fuel's energy that would otherwise be wasted in the form of exhaust gases. The addition of a supercharger can significantly increase the output of an engine without having to increase its size (or displacement).

The powerful engine fits the 605 like a glove. Thanks to a superb chassis, suspension, brakes and roadholding, the 605 has a degree of active safety unmatched by its rivals.

The turbo engine sends the 605 on its way - and keeps it going - like a rocket.

However, the car's ride is so smooth and quiet the driver and passengers see the wild performance on the rev counter rather than feel it in the pits of their stomach. Although it has a sports-car performance, the 605 is too elegant to be sporty.

All-in-all, the IDF generals have received a superb staff car, in spite of the bureaucracy involved in its choice.

OFF THE SHELF

MARTHA MEISELS

HOW many angels can dance on the head of a pin, and how many brands of mustard can the local marketplace absorb? The latest arrival is familiar to many Americans, especially New Yorkers. It's Gulden's Spicy Brown Mustard, made by American Home Foods, a New York-based company.

It is made entirely from natural ingredients - mustard seed, vinegar, salt, and spices, including turmeric (*kurkum* in Hebrew), which helps give it the brownish yellow color. Unlike some brands, Gulden's contains no food colorings or sugar.

The jar looks like glass, but is actually plastic, making it lighter and safer to take in a picnic hamper.

The kashrut symbol is a simple "K," but the label states that the supervision is given by Rabbi Benjamin Weinbach and Rabbi Jacob Cohen, both of Queens, who are well-known Orthodox rabbis in kashrut supervision.

The importers are Bnei Brak's Wolf Brothers, best known as the manufacturers of Matzot Aviv. Gulden's Spicy Brown Mustard can be found at most supermarket chains and in private shops. The price is NIS 5.80 for 226 grams (8 oz.).

In Hebrew, however, the label says "200 grams," to suit local food labeling law, which requires standardized sizing in round numbers (150, 200, 250 grams, and so on). The law purportedly makes it easier for consumers to compare like quantities. In practice, it's harder because the Hebrew label on imports generally shows less than the actual weight.

HEINZ MUSTARD - albeit less famous than Heinz Ketchup - hardly needs an introduction to anyone from the English-speaking world.

Its two varieties - Mild Yellow and Spicy Brown - have recently become available in local stores. The importer is Foodline of Rishon LeZion, and the price is NIS 5.75 for the mild, NIS 6.90 for the spicy. Both weigh 255 grams (9 oz.), or 250 if you read the Hebrew label. These American mustards have the same all-natural ingredients as the above brand, and are also without coloring or sugar.

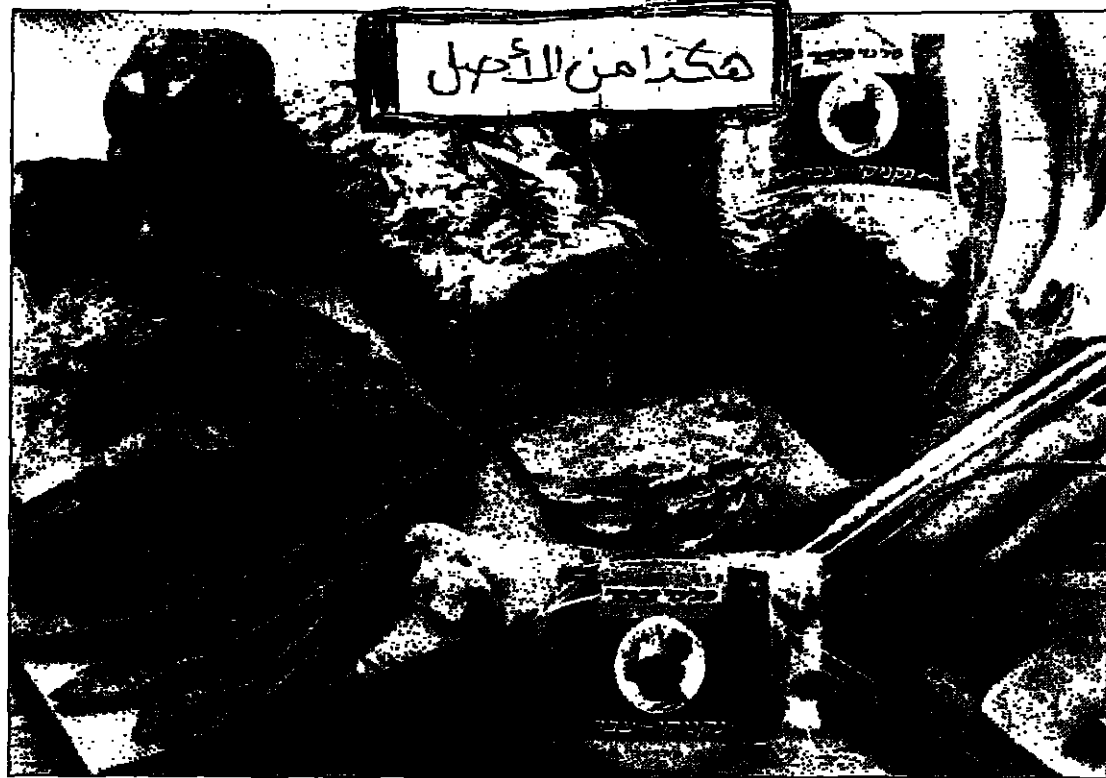
The Heinz products carry the O-U hechsher, with the additional endorsement of the Israeli Chief Rabbinate.

AT THE Israfood fair last week, I encountered a mustard with a difference - Billybee Honey Mustard, both regular and hot. It comes from a major honey products company in Canada.

Honey mustard will appeal to anyone who likes the combination of sweet with salty. The mild, regular version of Billybee mustard tastes decidedly sweet, even in a salami sandwich. It is sweeter than mayonnaise, for example. The "hot" version is sweet too, but with a real kick to it. I enjoyed both.

The ingredients include honey, dextrose and food coloring. The O-U hechsher is endorsed by the Israeli Chief Rabbinate. Billybee honey mustards are sold at Super-Sol/Hypercol, Shekem and Co-op Tzafon (in the North), and some private delicatessens.

Super-Sol's price is NIS 6.80 for the octagonal glass jar of ci-



Sabra Salads now has a sideline: beef, smoked turkey, hot dogs and various salamis, under the name Sabra's Salami; Tara Dairy's new 'Tzutzikim' are minicups filled with smooth white cheese and fruit.

their strength. The original English-language label says 284 gr. (10 oz.), which the local Hebrew sticker rounds off to 250 ml.

There is also a Billybee Honey Barbecue Sauce. The importer is Zur Agencies of Bnei Brak (03-618-3937).

YOU CAN try the mustard of your choice on a new brand of hot dogs and cold cuts called Sabra's Salami. It is a sideline of the well-known Sabra Salads (*Salat* Tzabar in Hebrew). The line includes smoked turkey and beef, and various salamis, sold both by weight at delicatessen counters and in vacuum packs.

For its entry into the meat field, Sabra rented a production line at one of Shekem's plants. The products carry the kashrut certification of Rabbi Yosef Levy of Kiryat Ye'arim.

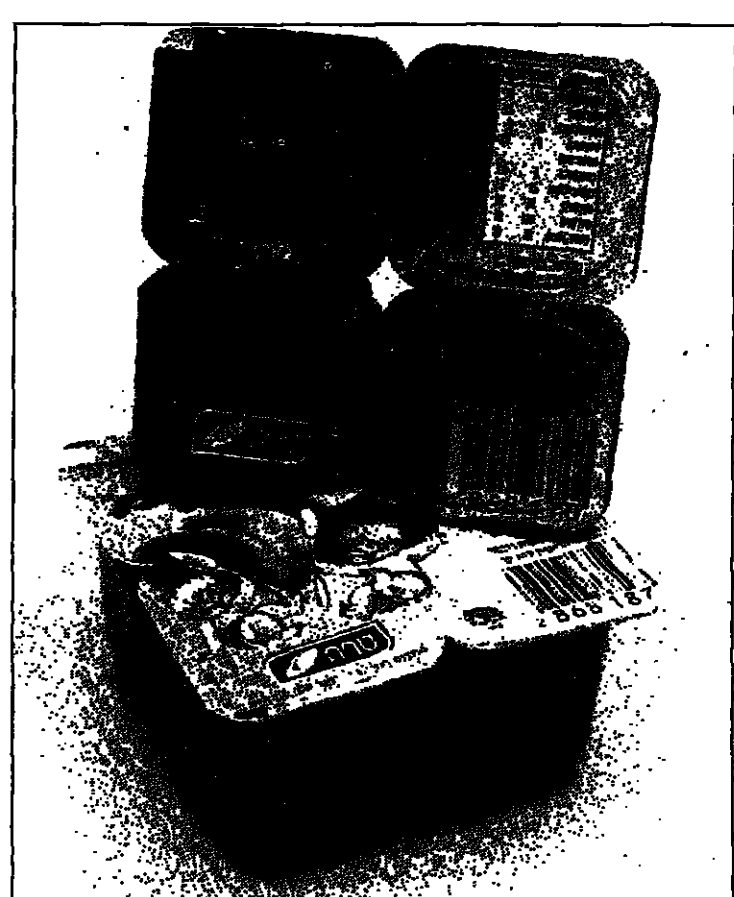
The packages have bright red, green and yellow labels, and the words "Sabra's Salami" appear in English. Our household tasted two types and found them perfectly acceptable, if nothing special.

For the time being, the new line can be found only at the Shekem chain and at private delicatessens. Sample prices: 400 grams of hot dogs, about NIS 7; French-style pastrami (smoked turkey breast), 350 grams for NIS 8.80; salami, 200 grams for NIS 8.40.

IN THE never-ending stream of schnitzel-style frozen meats, an occasional newcomer makes an impression.

One such product is Chong-Go, described as Chinese-style strips of turkey breast, manufactured by Ofek of Kiryat Shmona and marketed by Food Club. The strips are breaded in flour and sesame seeds, and fried in vegetable oil. They can be deep-fried or oven-warmed at home.

A 400-gram package sells for NIS 14.95. One might question the Chinese authenticity of Chong-Go, but my family was virtually united in liking it. It goes well with mustard honey or sweet-and-sour sauce. Except for the words "Food Club" and "Chong-Go," the bright red label



is entirely in Hebrew, plus some decorative lettering which appears to be Chinese.

BETWEEN Osem and Elite, there is a kind of "anything you can do, I can do better" rivalry.

Elite makes parve packaged cakes, so Osem has just come out with a line of cakes which are slightly bigger, without being more expensive. Called Habayit (home-style), the 450-gram Osem parve cakes come in a choice of chocolate, honey, English cake, lemon, orange, marble, and chocolate chip. I've tried the chocolate and chocolate chip, and find both of them good, though not necessarily superior to Elite's cakes.

The Osem cakes range NIS 7.90 to NIS 8.50, depending on the ingredients. The back of the package has English labeling, as well as Hebrew.

TARA Dairy's new Tzutzikim product for little children is a veritable copy of Strauss's successful Gamadin - four tiny plastic cups with white cheese flavored with real fruit.

Tara's come in strawberry, banana or peach, rather than Strauss's strawberry, banana or apricot, but otherwise they are

almost indistinguishable in appearance and taste.

Even the list price is identical - NIS 3.13 for four joined cups of 50 grams each. Tara's is selling at an introductory price of NIS 2.82 till the end of this month.

The one significant difference to hardy consumers may be the fact that the Tara product carries the Agudat Yisrael's *badatz* hechsher, as well as local rabbinic certification.

Strauss's general manager Michael Strauss seems unperturbed by the copycat product. "We're used to being imitated," he told me.

Strauss's Gamadin ("dwarfs") has just begun a prize campaign in conjunction with the Saturday morning children's TV show, "Boker Shel Kef," on the Second Channel, which may explain a sudden demand from children for the product.

Children are asked to build houses and palaces from empty Gamadin cups, and one winner each week will get a 14-inch color television set.

At the end of the month-long campaign one child and a parent will receive a free trip to Eurodisney. It is unlikely that Strauss's observant customers will be participating.

The winter of our discontent



Soon you'll be able to pick up Mondri fashion products for a song (and a half).

THIS is the time of year for stock-taking, when storekeepers offer incentives to attract buyers and offload merchandise.

Sales signs offering reductions of "up to 50%" have already begun to appear in display windows, but the average discount is closer to 15%. Some stores have

FLAIR
GREER FAY CASHMAN

additional ploys to lure the something-for-nothing crowd.

Hamashbir is offering a bottle of perfume to anyone who purchases NIS 299 worth of clothing; shoppers at Golf who buy at least NIS 355 worth of menswear will receive a free tie; Castro customers have to spend only NIS 100 to be eligible for a raffle in which the prize is a round-trip flight to London.

Not all stores are dangling gifts as added temptations.

Honigman is simply slashing prices by 20 to 50%, as are up-market stores such as Laurel and Cerutti.

Dorin Frankfurt creations are marked down by unspecified discounts, though knitwear is offered at 20% off the next purchase.

Unless you're really desperate for winter clothing, this is not yet the time to go bargain hunting. Prices plummet a lot further in January when merchandise must be moved to make way for the new season's collections.



It will still be raining next month when Mondri boots become more affordable.

There will be much more dramatic evidence of this in footwear, which has generally resisted stepping into the winter sales hoopla.

Anyone who's eyed a pair of NIS 700 Mondri boots will be able to pick them up for under NIS 400 by the end of next month.

BARGAIN BASEMENT

OFFERS

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN - 50 back copies, free. 02-572010.
ANTIQUE HANGING LAMP - unique, oblong. NIS 50. 04-344792.
KIDS' PLAY TABLE - and 2 chairs, excellent condition. NIS 50. 09-346872.
ROOF RACK - Subaru E10. NIS 70; bodybuilder's exercise bed and weights. NIS 150; punchbag. NIS 50. 04-832527.
RADIATOR - 15 bars, excellent condition. NIS 225. 04-383570.
BAVY STROLLER AND CARRIAGE - tagless, navy blue and white, good condition. NIS 270. 02-6419612.
SINGLE MATTRESS - 78x190 cm., NIS 75. 04-242377.
TEACOFFEE SERVICE - Porcelain, new. NIS 150; hand mixer, Braun, new. NIS 140; synthetic carpet, green, perfect condition. NIS 30. 02-5059171.
GARDEN ROSE - 20 m., NIS 20; fridge rollers on 54x72-cm. base. NIS 20; washing machine extension hoses (in and out). NIS 20; portable potty seat. NIS 10; 80 cl. white enamel paint. NIS 10; US-current portable hair drier. NIS 10; burger maker. NIS 10. 02-789712. NS.
MATTRESS - Sealy Posturepedic, 80 cm. wide, good condition. NIS 300 o.b.o. 02-766561.
BARBIE BEDTIME - soft, opens and closes eyes and mouth, new in box. NIS 70. 02-973199.
DOCTORS' SMOCK - new. NIS 15; Nike shoes for women (worn once). NIS 220; Mowang women's sports shoes. NIS 60. 02-355336.
LADIES' LEATHER COAT - brown, full length, hardly worn. size 14. NIS 300. 02-436494. NS.
KITCHEN CUPBOARDS - black formica, marble top, taps, good condition. 02-512446.
LADIES' COAT - orange suede, three-quarter length, size 8. NIS 180; Harve Benard grey wool pleated skirt, flustering cm., size 6. NIS 100. 02-637132. NS.
DESK - large, blue, 7 drawers. NIS 300. 02-724951.

FARTISA ORGAN - free to needy organization. 123. 02-430725. NS.
SHAVIT GAS STOVE - 5 burners, large electric oven, good condition. NIS 300. 02-525987.
BAMBOO ROUND ARMCHAIR - with blue flowered cushion, NIS 100; children's chair and stool. NIS 40. 02-431284.
VICTROLA - hornless model, and 50 78s. NIS 250; gas heater. NIS 50. 02-433341. NS.
WOOD TABLE - white top, 70x120 cm. excellent condition. NIS 250. 02-639942. NS.
COMPUTER CHAIR - with knee rest, NIS100; video *The Untouchables*. NTSC, new. NIS 35. 02-282496. NS.
2 FLUORESCENT LIGHT FITTINGS - 1 x 40 watts, NIS 50 each; embroidered cape, red, from Kashmir. NIS 200. 02-786052.
QUEEN MATTRESS - and box spring, plus 4 pillows, clean. NIS 300. 02-352133. NS.
BALOGN LAMP - with built wall fixture, rose beige. NIS 85. 02-829274.
QUATTRO PRO - version 5.0, for DOS, complete with original literature. NIS 195. 02-760792.
EXERCISE BIKE - Battle Creek deluxe model. NIS 250. 02-931759. NS.
SILVERWARE - service for 8 (50 pieces), stainless steel, new. NIS 50; gourmet cutlery set, 6 knives, used once. NIS 60. 02-618538.
MEN'S COAT - full length, plush, Harbor Master, American size 44, beige, like new. NIS 300. 02-820024.
MEN'S SUIT - jacket, coat, trousers, very good condition, medium size, all for NIS 130. 02-630014.
STOVE - A&G, good condition. NIS 300. 02-702911.
PC ORIGINAL - 2 drives, 360. NIS 200. 02-618203.
YOUTH BED - with pull-out second bed and storage drawer. Size of Joe. 02-762270.
WEBSTER ELECTRONIC DICTIONARY - Model EHF 2000, contains over 300,000 words, Hebrew, English and French, as new. NIS 250. 02-716897.
STEREO RADIO CASSETTE - Sony portable, as new, excellent condition, battery

and mums operated. NIS 120. 02-793287.
WOOLRICH PARKA - water repellent, medium, rust-colored, new. NIS 225. 02-619527. NS.
ORGAN MUSIC BOOKS - NIS 80; children's games, most in original boxes, excellent condition. NIS 200; blackboard. NIS 20. 02-865839.
BLACK & WHITE TV - 21". Zenith, NIS 150 o.b.o. Ruit. 02-715249. NS.
TAP SHOES - size 37. NIS 80; women's jacket, sweater and vest (size 10-12). NIS 50. 02-851040.
BOOKCASE WITH SHELVES - and 4 drawers. 45 cm. wide. NIS 225; oakwood coat rack. NIS 50. 02-511763. NS.
KEROSENE HEATER - Valor, English, plus full jerrycan, NIS 150; child's car seat. NIS 99; smoke detector, ionization type, new in box. NIS 50. 02-435440. NS.
HANDMIXER - 220 volt, NIS 40; slow cooker, deep fryer, 110 volt. NIS 180. 02-352112.
GIRLS' SNOWSUITS - pink, waterproof, size 24 M. NIS 45; 3-T jacket, pants. NIS 90; robes, red, 2-T, jerrycloth, 9 m. 2-T. NIS 20 each. 02-371991.
CASIO DIVERS' WATCH - 300 meters, rotating dial, day/date, stainless steel. NIS 290. 02-868201.
FORMICA TABLE - gray, 60x90 cm. NIS 85; wooden cupboard, brown, with shelves, 40 cm x 61 cm x 215 cm H. NIS 175. 02-960306.
LEATHER JACKET - black, lined, fur collar. NIS 200; bronze curtains, lined, long. NIS 20. 02-242455. NS.
WOMAN'S SEALSKIN COAT - size 42, good condition. NIS 300. 02-519424. NS.
VEGETABLE CHOPPER - in box. NIS 40; wig in box. NIS 120; leather foot stool, off-white. NIS 80; interior plant. NIS 60. 02-432594, weekdays after 5 p.m.
CASIO WATCH - 50 memories. NIS 100; Corvelli dishes. NIS 150. 02-386058.
FRENCH LIBRARY - literature, history, biography, maps, others. NIS 20 each. 02-635850.
PLIABLE HALOGEN STANDING LAMP - 220 cm. 90/110 in black and gold metal. almost new. NIS 340. 02-561232. eyes.
CHANEL COLOGNE - 50 ml. NIS 250 o.b.o.; child's scarf. NIS 50. 02-436574.

BOYS' WOOL SUIT - dark gray, size 10, from Nordstroms. NIS 300. 02-618712.
ELECTRIC TYPEWRITER - Smith-Corona, NIS 180; car radio, AM, NIS 30; car cover. NIS 22. 02-511723. NS.

WANTED

SINGERS - for Haifa AACI choir. Rhoda. 04-284752.
MAH-JONGG SET - new or used, in good condition. 02-932503. 02-938879.
SONICNO - Samuel, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel/Ezra/Nehemiah (4 vols.). 02-379534.
SINGERS - all voices, for opera workshop, must be able to read music. Mickey. 02-434622, evenings and weekends.
MAH-JONGG SET - new or used, in good condition. 02-932503.
NIKON FA CAMERA - with Nikon lens, 55mm macro Nikkor. 02-384390. Mordche.
MANUAL - for Peugeot 309. 02-525026.
FAX MACHINE - late model. 02-341213.
INEXPENSIVE DRESSMAKER - 02-610733.
AIRCONDITIONER FOR WINDOW - or split, in good condition. 02-354789.
SMALL CARPET - about 4x5 ft., small, low table, surface about 2x1/2 ft. 02-610733.
STAR TREK BOOK - and Taltzman games. 02-821792. NS.
YOUTH BED - with pull-out bed below. 02-665313. NS.
ALF - Anyone take the second part shown on November 29? Please call 02-860005 or we're in suspense!
33 RPM CLASSICAL RECORDS - and manual or semi-automatic turntable. 02-534081.
CAGE FOR CAT OR SMALL DOG - airline-approved type only, needed urgently. 02-417841. NS.
ADULT TRICYCLE - that turns on batteries, for a young man after bone marrow transplant. Donation if possible. 02-424886.
OLD BOOKS - 02-823788.
ANYONE TO REPAIR - old music box (sentimental value). 02-431110, mornings, 02-417841. NS.

7-9. NS.
BOXSPRING FOR DOUBLE BED - good condition. 02-856530.
OVERSIZE SPEAKERS - subwoofer. 02-617091.
MASSAGE TABLE - in good condition, preferably 27" wide, with opening for face or with a head cradle. 02-439036. NS.
OLD DOCUMENTS - IDs, passports, any paper items for university project. Will pay for certain items. Zvi. 02-892877 or 02-619891.
GIVAT ZE'EV - car pool required to and from school in Ramat. 02-860145. NS.
INSTRUCTION MANUAL - for National VTR model NV-L10, to copy. 02-860113.
VIDEO CAMERA - with or without recorder; rails for electric train; sound card for computer. 02-860113.
CELLO TEACHER - also cello in good condition. 02-271317. NS.
BUILT-IN OVEN - and gas hob, used/new; TV/video table, reasonable. 02-340474.
CROCKPOT - (electric slow cooker), in good condition. 02-511160.
NEW MEMBERS - for small weekend players. P.O.B. 26325, Jerusalem.
PLAYPEN - large, wooden, good to excellent condition. 02-856026. NS.
THE HEBREW ENCYCLOPEDIA - in good condition. 02-252323, 02-258044. NS.
TWIN BEDS OR SOFA - good condition, reasonable price. 02-545456. NS.
OLD RUGS - and carpets. 02-812662.
SET OF DRUMS - for needy student, will pick up. Reasonable. 02-351331.
COMPLETE ENCYCLOPEDIA - in good condition. Tova. 02-811978. NS.
OLD WRISTWATCHES - hobbyist watchmaker will purchase forgotten handwound Swiss watches, gold/steel, Patex, Le Coultre, other, any condition. 02-758389/02-634129.
MAMIYA'S (SLR) LENSES - photo bag, photography and darkroom equipment. Mario. 02-961482. NS.
OVEN - in excellent working condition. 02-630712.
BEDROOM WARDROBE - 4-5 doors. 02-769584.
COLOR MONITOR - for computer with graphics card, preferably VGA or Super

VGA, reasonable price. 02-514891.
FOR YESHIVA BOYS - coats, sweaters, blankets, heaters and furniture, as donations. Also want to buy bunkbed and dresser. Chavy. 02-737688.
ENCYCLOPEDIA JUDAICA - in good condition. 02-638220.
HARD GUITAR CASE - for classical guitar, snow sled. 02-935322. NS.
CELL - to borrow with option to buy. Good condition, please. Yohanan. 02-631022.
DRIER - gas or electric, in good condition. 02-325648.
STOKERDOOM FOR OLIM - seeks electrical appliances, household goods (pots, pans, dishes, etc.), old furniture, etc. 25 Givat Shaul St., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., 515254. Will collect.
USED FURNITURE - for Russian olim, will collect. Keren Kitz, 788277. NS.

LOST & FOUND

LOST - female boxer on December 1, brown with black face and white spot on chest, wearing black collar, vicinity of Promenade, name is Vague. 02-724204.

PETS

KITTEN - very pretty, gray tabby, female, 3 months, affectionate, vet checked, free to loving home. 02-531179.
SHALLISE DOG - energetic, female, affectionate, loves children and animals, to home, preferably with garden. 02-394261.
GENUINE CAT LOVERS - Help us help them. Even one hour a week can save the life of a cat/dog. Lev Le'Chai, 02-3050502-31626.
WANTED - small, spayed, female dog who likes kids and apartment living. Offering good home. 02-519739. NS.
AFFECTIONATE DOG - black labrador, one year old, vaccinated, free to warm home. 02-860119.

Sorry, no listings accepted without a coupon

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BARGAIN BASEMENT accepts ads of up to 20 words free of charge on these conditions: Only one ad per household per week. THE LIMIT per ad in the "offers" section is a TOTAL of NIS 300, and the price of each item must be stated in shekels. The following ads are NOT accepted: business offers; apartment sales; rentals or exchanges; car sales; job offers; situations wanted; solicitations for donations; offers of marriage or other personal relationship. Ads must be printed in English and submitted on the attached coupon. ADS MAY NOT BE SUBMITTED BY PHONE OR FAX. The right to reject or edit any ad is reserved.

Ads must reach The Bargain Basement, The Jerusalem Post, Rehov Yirmiyahu in Ramatna (POB 81, Jerusalem 91 000) by NOON Sunday of the week of publication. Because of space limitations, ads may be held over and published the following week.

The price of each item must be stated

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Slap in the face in Egypt

IF President Ezer Weizman had to describe his trip to Egypt this week in his own refreshingly undiplomatic language, he would have probably said, "I was shafted." Weizman made the visit reluctantly. When the invitation was first extended he responded with a flat no, dictated by healthy patriotic instincts. He insisted he would go to Cairo only if Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak - who has never set foot on Israeli soil since he became president - visited Israel first. This was not just a petulant demand for diplomatic balance, but an expression of concern for Israel's dignity shared by a vast majority of Israelis. Weizman was finally persuaded to change his mind only after he was promised a reciprocal visit by Mubarak. During his visit, which ended yesterday, he discovered that Mubarak had no intention of setting a date.

When the Likud and the national unity governments were in power, Mubarak's excuse for not meeting with Israeli leaders was "there was nothing to talk about" - another way of saying that Israel had to recognize the PLO and agree to withdrawal from "the territories" before Mubarak would deign to meet with an Israeli premier. The ascent of the Labor government eliminated this excuse. Not only did the government adopt the "land for peace" formula and recognized the PLO, it gave Egypt credit - mostly undeserved - for advancing the "peace process." As a result, Mubarak allowed Israeli officials - from the prime minister down - to make pilgrimages to Cairo and pay him homage. Yet despite vague promises to visit Israel, he has always found reasons not to do so.

Unfortunately, Weizman - who prides himself on being straightforward and blunt - yesterday found it necessary to repeat the intelligence-insulting Egyptian excuses for Mubarak's snub. As the first Arab country to make peace with Israel, he said on arriving back home, Egypt has suffered boycott and ostracism by other Arab states. Even now, he added, the Egyptians have to be concerned about the impact in the Arab world of a presidential visit to Israel.

Such rationalizations are ludicrous not only because there is no more official Arab criticism - let alone censure - of Egypt's relations with Israel, but because it fails to state the obvious: Egypt made peace with Israel not as an act of charity but because it was in its national interest. Its net gain from the Camp David accords far outweighs its temporary and relatively insignificant losses. Egypt not only achieved the repossession of Sinai with all its extraordinary resources - including very substantial oil wells developed by Israel - but steady American aid to the tune of almost \$3 billion a year. Moreover, it is only because peace with Israel has made Egypt popular in Congress that the US forgave an \$8 billion Egyptian debt after the Gulf War, to which Egypt contributed virtually nothing. (Typically, Israel's casualties and

damages in that war elicited nothing but derision from Egypt at the time.)

To reporters, Mubarak explained his refusal to visit Israel by claiming that it would harm the negotiations with Syria. Obviously, the Egyptian leader has infinite faith in Israeli credibility. According to Mubarak, Syria feels hurt because Israel made peace with Jordan. A visit to Jerusalem by Mubarak would make Hafez Assad feel even more isolated. One can only wonder what kind of peace Mubarak and Assad have in mind if a visit by an Egyptian president 15 years after Camp David can endanger it.

But the allusion to Syria is not completely irrelevant. What Mubarak means is that Israel can only expect his visit when it makes peace with Syria which - as he made clear to *The Jerusalem Post* - can only be achieved on Syrian terms. The implication is clear enough: the great Egyptian gesture will come only when Israel earns it. Israelis, who remember that the same gesture was promised after the Tabu issue would be settled, after peace talks would begin, after Israel would recognize the PLO and after several other such "landmarks," can hardly be blamed for not holding their breath.

It can, of course, be argued that a visit is more a gesture than policy, and that the important thing is that - as Mubarak put it on Tuesday - the Israel-Egypt peace "is getting warmer every year." But facts point in the opposite direction. The main emphasis the government-directed Egyptian press put on the Weizman visit was that it afforded Mubarak an opportunity to raise the nuclear issue. Leaving aside the impropriety of discussing such issues with a ceremonial president (Weizman denied it was actually raised) the Egyptian preoccupation with Israel's reported nuclear capability gives credence to the gravest Israeli suspicions about Egypt's ultimate intentions. To demand that Israel agree to be a non-nuclear power while Egypt itself refuses to renounce chemical weapons (which it used in the 1966 war against Yemen) and while all of Israel's sworn enemies have huge arsenals of non-conventional weapons of mass destruction is, at best, to show indifference to Israel's security concerns.

Such indifference can only mean that Egypt wants Israel not only to return to its "natural size," within the 1949 armistice lines, but to be at the mercy of regional dictatorships already armed with biological and chemical weapons and striving to achieve nuclear capability. Particularly disturbing is that Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa, in a UN speech, linked normalization of Arab relations with Israel to Israeli acquiescence to denuclearization.

At the Casablanca conference, Egypt presented several masterplans for regional projects, accompanied with maps. None of the plans, nor maps, mentioned Israel. One can only wonder if this, too, is a reflection of Mubarak's wish not to make the Syrians feel isolated. After all, Syrian maps, too, make no mention of Israel.



A brush-off in Cairo

PRESIDENT Weizman was doing his utmost this week in Cairo to stem the deterioration in relations between Egypt and Israel. It is a Herculean task, especially in light of Shalhevet Freier's reports on the true intentions of the Sadat-Mubarak regimes concerning Israel.

Shalhevet who? When Shalhevet Freier died a month ago, he would have been proud to realize that his name was virtually unknown to the Israeli public. Yet he was a brilliant nuclear scientist and master secret-service officer who had served his country for half a century.

He helped organize the illegal immigration of Holocaust victims to Israel, and was the first intelligence officer in the Mossad. Forty years ago, he was the man whom Shimon Peres sent to Paris to make a deal with the French to build a nuclear reactor in Dimona.

The negotiations were tortuous. One of the French scientists, a Professor Goldsmitt, was initially hostile to helping Israel. Goldsmitt had participated in the Manhattan project in New York, creating the first atomic bomb during the Second World War, and his opinions weighed heavily with the French.

As Freier once told us: "It was while having lunch with the top brass at the Crillon Hotel that I felt Goldsmitt's antagonism. I appealed to him privately, as Jew to Jew, to help us. He replied: 'I'm French before I am a Jew.'"

The softly spoken Freier, never known to lose his cool or his nerve, was determined to ensure that Israel had a nuclear option. It took him two years to achieve "a kind of friendship" with the French scientist. Goldsmitt finally agreed to assist Israel.

Freier knew that a nuclear research facility was vital. This had become clear to him after tracking down Nazi SS officer Walter Rauff in Italy.

Responsible for the death of 90,000 Jews, Rauff, an expert in biological and chemical warfare, had initially sought asylum in South America. After World War II, Syria hired the Nazi to build unconventional warfare factories. Rauff discovered that the Mossad was on his track and fled to a "secure nest" in Europe.

Freier walked into Rauff's hideout and came straight to the point: "Either you sign your own death warrant now, or else you return to Syria and then tell us every detail of what they are up to."

Rauff, like the captured Eichmann, realized that he was facing a new kind of Jew. He became a vital Israeli spy. His detailed information about the Damascus installations spurred Freier to do everything in his power to ensure

URI DAN
DENNIS EISENBERG

There are two motives here: Egypt's generals are dying to try out their American-honed skills over the vast expenses of the Sinai without attention being paid to them. The Egyptian army today is the most powerful in the Middle East. Its 200 F-16 jets, flown by US-trained pilots, are on 24-hour alert. It is a totally different force from the poorly equipped Russian-trained army of 1967 and 1973.

El-Baz argues that the US can send the men freed from Sinai duty to the Golan Heights when Yitzhak Rabin surrenders this area. "That way," he says, "you won't even have to consult Congress."

El-Baz's attempts to destabilize Israel can also be seen in the way Mubarak's police turn a blind eye to the heavy flow of Egyptian and other arms, ammunition and explosives into Gaza.

Weizman has underlined official Israeli policy: Israel will not sign the NPT unless it is part of an overall peace treaty embracing the entire Middle East. Israel will not sign - despite Egypt's almost daily insistence - while Iraq, Syria, Iran and Libya build up massive supplies of unconventional weapons and seek to acquire nuclear armaments.

By his growing hostility to Israel, Mubarak is trying to persuade the mullahs of Iran that he is as staunch a Moslem as they are. He is frantically trying to come to terms with Tehran, particularly with Ali Montasheeri and Ali Fakharian, who direct the activities of Hamas, Hizbullah and other fundamentalist organizations that engage in global terror.

Egypt's president signaled his true intentions quite clearly during the Weizman visit. In a land where symbolism counts for a great deal, he deliberately "vanished" when "Hafikva" was played in honor of his guests.

In exchange for helping Hamas and similar groups from Gaza to murder Jews throughout Israel, Mubarak hopes to strike a deal. He wants Iran to call off fanatical Moslems who are murdering his officials and tourists. He fears that Iranian-funded terrorists aim to topple him and seize control of his country.

The writers are authors of *The Mossad: Secrets of the Israeli Secret Service and other books on the Middle East*.

While hosting Weizman, Mubarak was looking over his shoulder to Iran

that Israel got its reactor. Rauff died of natural causes several years later.

A few weeks before his own death, Freier declared: "Mubarak is moving heaven and earth to get Israel to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. I have it on good authority that Clinton has refused Egyptian demands that he compel Israel to do so."

"Clinton knows that if Israel withdraws from the Golan and other areas like Judea and Samaria, he cannot ask Jerusalem also to surrender its one remaining deterrent: its nuclear capacity."

THE EGYPTIAN effort is part of a long-term program, initiated by Anwar Sadat, to "miniaturize Israel," prior to dismantling it. The mastermind behind Sadat, and now Mubarak, is Osama El-Baz. Intelligence agents who focus on Egypt have described him as a man who hides his hatred for Jews behind a poker player's mask. He embraces American Jewish and Israeli leaders, displaying the skill of a snake charmer.

As Mubarak's right-hand man, he pursues his traditional anti-Israel policy on many fronts. One ploy is to persuade the Americans to reduce the number of US observers in the Sinai multinational force. It is the observers' task to ensure that the Camp David accords are strictly kept.

El-Baz tells the Americans that this reduction will "save money" (even though Israel and Egypt's contribution to the force is minimal).

While hosting Weizman, Mubarak was looking over his shoulder to Iran

Fair
game

ESTHER HERTZOG

WE're talking about a very difficult population, one which has been educated not to cooperate with the police," a police investigator in the Alexandra Brandet case was reported as saying. It is a month since the 10-year-old immigrant girl from Russia disappeared.

Another report said the police had received 220 calls from the public in connection with the case. The two reports don't quite tally.

Weren't any of those calls made by people from the former Soviet Union? Were the calls categorized according to the accents of the callers and was it found that most of them had been made by people with "Israeli" accents and not "Russian" ones?

And what kind of "noncooperation" was that investigator referring to? Did the Russian immigrants the police called in for questioning behave any differently from other people called in for questioning in other investigations enough immigrants to enable

It's easy for the authorities to excuse their failures by defaming immigrants

such a broad generalization to be made? And if they did, why are Russian immigrants particularly being questioned?

It's said that some Israeli men sexually harass Russian women immigrants. Perhaps, therefore, large numbers of Israeli men should be undergoing questioning about the disappearance of this child.

The remark attributed to that police investigator makes a juicy headline. What could be better than a sweeping and stigmatizing generalization, one that combines the immigrants' "education" with "noncooperation with the police"? Especially with the current "atmosphere" of "let's get the immigrants from the CIS" at its height?

Is there any stigma they haven't been branded with? They're already deep into prostitution, and well tied in to swindling the authorities.

Now they're being accused of not cooperating with the police, and, on top of that, we're getting broad hints that their education isn't quite right, and that their relationship with their children is "different," inferior to the love and care Israelis lavish on their families (remember that immigrant who drowned her daughters a year ago?)

IN THE Alexandra Brandet affair, the editor didn't yield to the temptation to use that stigmatizing sentence as a headline. Can the police be looking to make headlines at any price - even collective defamation of the immigrants from the CIS?

Perhaps it was the fact that the police has reached a dead end in its investigation (as the sub-headline of the article reported) that motivated such wholesale defamation? Does the police feel it needs an excuse for its failure to trace the kidnapped child? That wouldn't be anything new.

When two immigrant girls from Ethiopia burned to death in January 1993, reports focused mainly on the customs of Ethiopian immigrants. One press report said: "The Ethiopians aren't aware of the dangers of fire." The Jewish Agency (which was responsible for the absorption center and for cutting off heating to its apartments) chose to shrug off the responsibility for the deaths, shifting the blame onto the immigrants themselves and implying that the deaths had resulted from the Ethiopians' widespread custom of burning incense.

Rather than the immigrants being "a very difficult population," it is those whose job it is to absorb them who are the difficult ones. Every time there is a difficulty, or even a hint of criticism of the way the absorption process is being handled, the absorption authorities are ready to blacken the names of all immigrants.

And the immigrants? They are hard put to reply to these hurtful, sweeping generalizations - which is why, perhaps, it's so easy to sling any kind of mud at them and describe them as a "difficult population."

(By arrangement with Ma'ariv)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE BOSNIAN LESSON

Sir, - One can't help but wonder if Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has been listening to the news from Bosnia. A ragtag army of Serbian so-called "rebels" is savaging, ethnically cleansing and annihilating Bosnian Moslems and seizing their land as Serbian territory. What might be of interest to Mr. Rabin is the action of the Serbs vis-à-vis the great power of NATO and the UN. They have treated them with utter contempt. Despite all the dire warnings coming from these august and all-powerful bodies, the Serbs have persisted in their lethal objectives. They have, within the last few days, added insult to injury and actually taken over 400 UN peace-keepers as political hostages. Of course, the US role in these proceedings has been even less distinguished.

Are these the world forces that Mr. Rabin is expecting to protect Israel from Syria, Palestinian Arabs, Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia once Mr. Rabin has given up Israel's vital defensive positions on the Golan Heights and in the mountains of Judea and Samaria?

Perhaps Mr. Rabin's memory is faulty, as well, even though he was a

very distinguished general at the time. In the four months prior to the 1967 Six Day War, Gamal Nasser launched 37 attacks into Israel while the Syrians shelled Israeli tractors on the shore of the Sea of Galilee from their perfect military perches atop the Golan Heights. Emboldened by his success, Nasser closed down Israeli shipping through the international Straits of Tiran and ordered the UN Emergency Force stationed in the Sinai to withdraw from their observation posts along the Israeli-Egyptian border. Without even bringing the matter to the attention of the General Assembly, secretary-general U Thant complied with the demand and the UN forces were gone within 48 hours, leaving Israel on its own.

Have times really changed? Is the Arab world really more content with the presence of the infidel Jewish State of Israel in their midst. What exactly constitutes a wake-up call for Mr. Rabin? Is he listening to the news? Is he listening to Mr. Arafat and Mr. Assad, or is he simply continuing to press his snooze alarm?

DR. J.S. KAUFMAN
Bloomfield, Michigan

DANGEROUS MYTH

Sir, - In your editorial of November 25 dealing with an American TV documentary about Islamic terrorism, you note that the American investigative reporter Steve Emerson "stresses that those calling for jihad against the Jews and the West are distorting and subverting the true meaning of Islam." This is a dangerous myth which, rather than simply publicize, you should vehemently condemn.

Moreover, it was most presumptuous of Mr. Emerson to declare what is or is not consistent with true Islam. It is the leaders and adherents of Islam who define true Islam. And, while many Moslems may disagree,

there are millions of Moslem leaders and followers throughout the world who view the acts of terrorism against Israel and the West as very much in harmony with their religious beliefs, i.e. true Islam.

To ignore this fact is to grossly underestimate the depth and magnitude of this scourge of humanity.

Torquemada was a good Christian.
Hitler was a good German.
And the Islamic terrorists are good Moslems.

JEFFREY TILLMAN
Ra'anana

A LICENSING BOARD
FOR JOURNALISTS

Sir, - I have just read about Sam Orban's plight and his treatment at the hands of local so-called journalists ("Tabloid finds Scrabble players 'guilty of snobbery,'" *Eye on the Media* of November 25).

Anybody who wants to be a journalist can study how to be one by enrolling at college or university, but to practice, all one has to do is to find a newspaper willing to provide a job. No examinations and no license are needed.

On the other hand, if you want to practice a trade, or be a public accountant, or a tourist guide, and so on, you will have to pass examinations and get a license before you are allowed to serve the public. No plumber can do the damage done to poor Sam.

If there were an authority issuing licenses to journalists and if people complained to it and the authority found them justified, the journalist's license would be revoked, and even the most irresponsible journalist would think twice before lying, cheating or fabricating a story.

So why don't we have a journalists' licensing board?

MICHAEL PAGGY
Petah Tikva

FAN MAIL

Sir, - The juxtaposition of Jean Wershaw's letter of thanks on December 8 and Moshe Kohn's excellent column on December 9 prompts me to write belatedly of my longstanding admiration for Moshe Kohn's erudition, skill with words, understanding of complex social problems and his ability to clarify them for his many readers. His weekly column is one of the features I look forward to eagerly.

SAMUEL KATZ
Tel Aviv



When this fellow regained consciousness, it was not stars that he saw. 'Am I in the North Pole?' a dazed Philip Anderson asked one of 10 Santa Clauses who converged on him after a van knocked him off his bicycle. It wasn't the North Pole but New York. The 10 sidewalk Santas tended to his injuries and directed traffic around the scene. Pseudo-Santa Lawrence Reichard, an emergency medical technician, was part of a Claus cluster handing out promotional fliers for a business called the Great American Backrub. Reichard took the vital signs of 63-year-old Anderson while another jolly old St. Nick held the man's neck straight and the rest summoned help or directed cars on Third Avenue. 'When the police arrive, there's 10 Santas standing around this guy,' said Bill Zanca, who hired the Santa salesmen to promote his quickie backrub service. 'Only in New York, right?' Anderson was hospitalized and released soon after.

(AP)

הכזמן הנכון

Hostile husband 'proved' his wife interrupts him

DEAR RUTHIE
RUTHIE BLUM



Dear Ruthie,
For years my husband has complained that I never let him finish a sentence. This is far from true, though it might happen now and then.

Recently he taped our discussions, without my knowledge, and played the tape when we were having some friends in. I'm sure he picked out my so-called "interruptions" from many conversations and spliced them together to give the impression of one continuous conversation. He denies this.

At any rate, he embarrassed me so much before my friends that I am thinking of leaving him. All my friends say I should take a course in "being kind to my husband" before he loses his patience and leaves me, or "batters" me. What do you advise?

Bewildered and Beside Myself
Somewhere in Israel

Dear B & B,
Playing the tape - spliced or not - in front of friends was an act of open hostility. All of the "friends" making light of such a breach of loyalty ought to be taking a course in marital relations themselves.

But ignoring a complaint your husband has had for years by denying its legitimacy was insensitive on your part. Admitting to an occasional interruption does not constitute taking your husband's feelings into account.

Perhaps his public display of aggression was an act of revenge. This unhealthy interaction is causing you to contemplate separation.

If you want to save your marriage, each of you has a lot of work ahead.

You might consider marital counseling to steer you through the work.

Dear Ruthie,

My son is in his last year of elementary school. Aside from the minimal reading required for his homework, he reads nothing but trash, mainly gossip about rock stars. I'm worried about how he will fare next year in junior high

school, and I'm saddened to see how little interest he has in anything artistic or in what is going on in the world.

I've begun "assigning" him a book a week. My husband thinks I should leave his education up to the school. What do you think?

Prose-Pushing Parent
Ramat Gan

Dear Prose-Pusher,
I can see why you're not keen on "leaving education up to the school" and why it saddens you that your son knows more about Michael Jackson than about the peace process.

Most parents are uneasy with the fact that their children think of Leonardo and Raphael as Ninja Turtles.

But it's a mistake to assign your son a reading list. It would serve him better in the future if you were to whet his appetite for those books instead. One way of doing this is to read aloud to him, in chapters.

Dear Ruthie,

My mother gave my wife a scarf for her birthday. My wife's not crazy about it, but I think she should wear it when we go to visit my parents.

The last time we saw my mother, my wife did not have it on. I don't see what the big deal is. Do you?

Shawl Gail
Jerusalem

Dear SG,
The trouble with little complaints is that they usually fit into a larger context. Since I have no information about the larger context, I can give only a superficial answer.

No, it would not kill your wife to don the gift when visiting your mother. The good thing about scarves is that they can be wrapped loosely around the neck and removed with the rest of the outer garments.

Letters should be addressed to: "Dear Ruthie," POB 81, 91000 Jerusalem. (Ruthie regrets not being able to guarantee publication of every letter, but will answer every letter received.)

BOOKS

REMEMBER LAUGHTER, by Neil Grauer. University of Nebraska Press. No price stated.

JAMES Thurber, born 100 years ago, was destined to be odd. That he was funny, too, was merely a bonus.

So begins a breezy new biography of the famed writer and cartoonist, *Remember Laughter*, by Neil Grauer. The book arrived in stores just ahead of a movie about the famed Algonquin Round Table called *Mrs. Parker and the Vicious Circle*.

This represents a sudden interest in the first generation of New Yorker writers and wits - Thurber, E.B. White, Dorothy Parker, Robert Benchley and Alexander Woollcott.

"Of course, Thurber was never part of the Algonquin Round Table," says Grauer. "He and E.B. White didn't see the value of sitting around, agonizing over one-liners. They saved it for the page."

A cartoonist/writer himself, Grauer found a natural subject in Thurber, the Columbus, Ohio, native whose simple line drawings of stern women and befuddled men are as familiar as his most famous literary creations, such as "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" and "The Night the Bed Fell."

The drawings, as Grauer reminds readers, were not an instant success. *New Yorker* editor Harold Ross would not publish them when Thurber first joined his staff. In a scene described by an earlier biographer, Grauer recounts: "He asked Thurber, 'How the hell did you get the idea you could draw?'"

AFTER READING *Remember Laughter*, one is tempted to recast the question. Where did Thurber, the son of a political functionary from a decidedly quirky family, get the idea he could do anything? For while Thurber's reminiscences emphasized the lighter side of his life, there was plenty of darkness, literally and figuratively.

At age six, Thurber lost his left eye when his brother William tried to reenact the William Tell legend without an apple. The ac-



A childhood accident left Thurber with a fuzzy view of the world.

cident also damaged the right eye, so Thurber's world was always a bit fuzzy. Later in life, despite several operations, nothing could save him from blindness.

And Thurber's first attempt at college was disastrous, largely because of Ohio State's emphasis on things that did not come easily to young Jamie: gym, marching drills and microscopes. He dropped out, but made a second pass at a college education in 1915. Buoyed by professors and a friend who recognized his inchoate talent, Thurber began to come into his own.

Excelling at literature at Ohio State was somewhat suspect at the time. Thurber's favorite English professor liked to say of the school's priorities: "Millions for manure, but not one cent for literature."

The years that followed college included the then-necessary rites of passage for a young writer: newspaper work, Paris, a cheap room in Greenwich Village, and

many, many rejection slips.

His first wife, Althea, suggested he spend no more than 45 minutes composing his humorous pieces. (This unhappy marriage ended in 1935; Thurber then married Helen Wismer.) The new system apparently worked, as the *New Yorker* snapped up a story about a man trying to set the world record for most revolutions in a revolving door.

Thurber joined the *New Yorker* in 1927 as an editor, although he was soon "demoted" - at his request - to full-time writer.

Thurber's office-mate quickly became a fan and mentor, and when Ross turned down Thurber's drawings, the friend insisted Thurber illustrate a collaborative effort called *Is Sex Necessary?* The book was a success, paving the way for Thurber's drawings to appear in the *New Yorker*.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, he produced some of his best work, including *My Life and Hard Times*, *The Last Flower* and

his fables. In Thurber's version of "Little Red Riding Hood," the girl produces a gun and dispatches the wolf with a single shot. The moral: "It's not so easy to fool little girls nowadays as it used to be."

His work in the 1940s and '50s has not held up as well, but it continued to bring him success, fame and money. As Burton Bernstein's more exhaustive biography of Thurber made clear almost 20 years ago, this is not a combination that brings out one's best.

Essentially blind by 1947, Thurber became an increasingly cantankerous man who thought he had a shot at the Nobel Prize. By the time he died in 1961, at age 66, he had alienated many.

Though Grauer relied heavily on existing works, he also drew on new sources. "To be blind and angry and alcoholic and old is a combination that no one should go through," Roger Angell, a *New Yorker* editor who knew Thurber, told Grauer. "Add

fame to that and it's a terrible burden."

Rosemary Thurber claims in the book that her father abused alcohol, but was not an alcoholic. She attributes his prickly temperament to "just the way human beings do their stuff."

E.B. White had a gentler view, despite a famous rift with Thurber over the latter's Harold Ross memoir, which White found in poor taste.

"I was one of the lucky ones," White wrote in a tribute to Thurber after his death, the kind of piece Thurber had written for so many colleagues. "I knew him before blindness hit him, before fame hit him, and I tend always to think of him as a young artist in a small office in a big city, with all the world still ahead."

Grauer, perhaps best known for his scoop on the antisemitism and racism evident in H.L. Mencken's diaries, also has dug up some new information on Thurber. He located Thurber's FBI file, started in 1939 because of his public sentiments on the Spanish Civil War (he opposed dictator Francisco Franco). And an interview with illustrator Al Hirschfeld confirmed what was believed to be an apocryphal story, about Thurber's habit of taking out his glass eye at cocktail parties.

But for Grauer, the most poignant personal discovery was of Thurber's work as a children's writer. These stories, including "The White Deer," "Many Moons" and "The 13 Clocks," share a voice distinct from the style of his adult essays and stories. He loved writing these stories and once described "The White Deer" as the "most fun I ever had."

As Thurber wrote in the introduction to "The 13 Clocks": "In the end [the publishers] took it away from me, on the grounds that I was having fun tinkering with clocks and running up and down secret stairs. They had me there."

Fittingly, it was one of Thurber's children's stories that provided the title for Grauer's biography. In "The 13 Clocks," Thurber had this bit of advice: "Remember laughter. You'll need it even in the blessed isles of Ever After."

One can only hope he remembered it, too. (The Baltimore Sun)

Splat! Some hunters do it for the fun, not the kill

TRAVEL

BOB DROGIN

RIFFLE at the ready, Adrian Read stalked slowly through the tall grass and thorn bushes. Suddenly he stopped and patted the air with his hand.

The signal was clear: Quiet - elephants ahead.

Moving quickly through the brush to stay downwind of the seven huge cows and calves, the 32-year-old professional hunter quickly raised the gun to his shoulder and fired. Splat! The shot hit the closest elephant's ear.

Then twice more, once to the trunk and then a would-be kill shot smack on the giant gray forehead. Splat! Splat! With that, the polka-dotted pachyderm turned and ran with the herd.

Welcome to splatball safaris, the latest and strangest attempt to marry two of humankind's most primal urges - to hunt large animals and to separate tourists from their wallets.

Here in a corner of a million-acre tract filled with some of Africa's most dangerous game, Read plans to begin leading safaris this November for anyone willing to pay \$700 a day to shoot bull elephants, Cape buffalo or other wild animals with marble-sized gelatin pellets filled with nontoxic, neon-orange vegetable dye.

The only trophy is a video - for another \$150 or so.

"We call it eco-hunting," said Read's partner, Dave Rhodes. "It's for people who want to hunt but don't want to kill. Some people say it's a contradiction in terms." Actually, some say much worse.

Dick Pitman, head of the non-profit conservationist Zambezi Society, is also dubious. "What for?" was his initial reaction. "How many animals are they going to have to shoot [with a real gun] when the animal turns and charges?"

"I don't think it's ethically right," said Jules Turnbull-Kemp, managing director of Kgama Wildlife Operations in

South Africa, which sells safaris for hunters to shoot tranquilizer darts at rhinos before they are moved, and cull excess elephants and other large game in national parks.

"Why not just sneak up and shoot it with a camera?"

Read, a tall, taciturn man who also runs regular hunting safaris, concedes that not every elephant will be so cooperative as to simply run away, as the three he splatted for demonstration purposes did on a recent sunny afternoon.

He said he'll charge full safari prices to cover the government trophy fees if he has to kill an angry tusker with the .458 Winchester elephant gun that an aide carries close by. "And eventually we'll have to," he said.

But that is one of the selling points, said Rhodes. "The thing about this is it's even more dangerous than normal hunting. Because once shot, the animal's not dead. He can still come at you."

Both men insist the elephants are not harmed by the pellet, and

that the dye fades quickly. To demonstrate, Read shot his partner in the back from about three meters. It left a nasty purple bruise on his back, and a large orange splotch on his shirt that didn't fade after four hours.

AT NEARBY Victoria Falls, thrill-seekers line up to pay \$90 to bungee jump off a bridge that spans the stunning 110-meter-deep Zambezi River gorge. It's advertised as the highest commercial bungee jump in the world, as well as "the most awesome and terrifying experience of your life."

Others fly spluttering light aircraft over the thundering falls, or are flung from rafts as they whitewater down the raging Zambezi. Those unwilling to risk their lives in such adventure sports need only visit the park that flanks the famous falls.

In a part of the planet that apparently never heard of liability insurance, tourists may walk up to the edge of the chasm, where at most a small barrier of

thorn bushes blocks the way. Some people wade in the torrent close by the sheer, heart-stopping drop-off.

And big-game hunting is still hugely popular here. The truly rich aim for the endangered rhinoceros in South Africa, where about 70 of the older animals are killed each year for fees ranging up to \$50,000.

Turnbull-Kemp says many of his clients take home not just the head as a trophy, but the entire animal. For the record, a taxidermist charges \$25,000 to stuff and mount a life-size rhino.

"We had one chap a few years ago who took two, one for him and one for his wife," he said. "They had to take the roof off their house to lower them in with a crane."

Still, shooting orange dye at two-ton animals with tusks - not to mention more aggressive Cape buffalo, usually considered the most dangerous animal to hunt - seems like a sport apart.

Read got the idea last year when he borrowed a splatgun

from Rhodes, who had failed in an attempt to run paintball war games for weekend warriors. Read wanted to use the Uzi-sized gun, which is powered by a CO₂ cartridge, to help train aspiring game rangers. He soon began splatting elephants instead.

And elephants abound here, as do lions, zebra, giraffes, baboons, impala, and scores of other species. They make their home amid the endless expanse of teak and bloodwood trees that dot the rocky ridges and sandy soil.

Both men say they are sensitive to charges that splatballing is, as one colleague recently complained to them, "degrading for the elephant."

"I said it was far more degrading to get a .458 bullet through the brain than a splat on the forehead," Rhodes said.

(Los Angeles Times)

For Ben-Gurion arrivals: A traveler-friendly hall

TRAVEL TIPS
HAIM SHAPIRO

THE new hall for those awaiting incoming passengers at Ben-Gurion Airport is due to open this week for its running-in period. The hall, which can hold 2,000 people, is to have desks for rental car agencies, banks and money changers, tour organizers and other tourist-related businesses.

Work is continuing on a communications center for the hall, which is to include a mobile phone rental facility, computerized information services, and fax and other office services.

A WEALTH of concerts, plays and exhibitions are to be part of the Festival of Arts and Culture in Britain in 1995.

More than 350 events are scheduled throughout the country between January and August, including many concerts to mark the 300th anniversary of the death of English composer Henry Purcell. They are featured in a 32-page guide published by the British Tourist Authority, and available free from its offices.

ARKIA is offering Israelis and tourists a vacation in a Eilat combined with a visit to Petra in Jordan. The package includes a round-trip flight from Ben-Gurion Airport, three nights with breakfast in a hotel of the Isrotel chain, and one night in Jordan, with tours of Aqaba and Petra and full board. Price start at NIS 1,070 midweek and NIS 1,158 for weekends.

A TICKET to the musical *Miss Saigon* is one of the attractions offered by Jet Line for its London package, which also includes air fare and three nights with break-

fast. The package sells for \$502.

TWA IS to inaugurate nonstop night flights from Tel Aviv to New York on January 11. The flights, on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday, will leave at 1:30 a.m. and arrive in New York at 6:30 a.m.

According to the airline, the arrival time offers convenient connections to numerous destinations in the US. The night flights are to replace TWA's nonstop morning flights, which leave at 9:15.

A SERIES of dirt-cheap vacations to Spain and Portugal, via London, is being offered by Saviv Ha'Olam. Prices include round-trip flights to London and from London to the Iberian peninsula. A seven-night package with full board on Spain's Costa Blanca starts at \$640, while a seven-night in the Algarve in Portugal with half board starts at \$654.

Passengers can also choose to stay over at a hotel in London before or after the visit to Spain or Portugal for £18 a night.

AMERICAN AIRLINES and Canadian Airlines are offering a VUSA for all their flights in North America, including the continental US, Canada, Hawaii, Mexico and the Caribbean.

The price of the VUSA starts at \$349 for three flights.

THE RAMADA Tel Aviv is offering Israelis a winter rate until February 28 of NIS 429 per couple for bed and breakfast. NIS 589 half board, and NIS 749 full board. For a stay of two nights or more, the hotel gives a 15-percent discount.

THE JERUSALEM POST
travel club

INSIDER'S LONDON AND THE OTHER ENGLAND
MARCH 13 - 22
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BUSINESS & FINANCE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1994

EU deal not expected to improve trade balance

JOSE ROSENFELD

TREASURY officials do not expect the emerging trade agreement with the European Union to improve the trade balance with Europe and are looking at speeding tariff reductions with other trading partners as a means to close the country's trade gap.

Treasury International Division director Ehud Kaufman said it is already clear, despite some changes that were made to the 1975 Free Trade Agreement with the EU to make it conform to new World Trade Organization requirements, there will not be a significant improvement in the trade balance.

"Although some of the agreement's political elements reflect progress, from the economic perspective, its impact will be marginal," said Kaufman. "Israel is

facing a strategic decision to accelerate tariff reductions on imports from third countries to cut \$1 billion from its trade gap by diverting trade to the Far East." Israel's trade deficit with Europe is \$7.5 billion, and "this agreement won't help reduce it by \$1b," Kaufman said.

According to reports from Europe, the Foreign Ministry agreed to concede to the EU on the issues of government procurement, textile exports and agricultural and food exports.

A report from Agence Europe said "the Israeli side announced that it would withdraw certain demands it had made in the areas of public procurement, textiles and outward processing. Consequent-

ly, the EU foreign ministers noted that a 'political agreement' was very close to being concluded with Israel. However, it is not certain that the agreement can be made official before the end of the year, as some technical questions remain to be settled."

A frustrated Israeli official noted that the report shows only Israeli concessions and none from the Europeans.

Several officials questioned whether the EU will back up its declarations in support of regional development with deeds.

To make their case, they pointed out that an Export Institute business conference on regional development that was to take place in Eilat next month was canceled due to the Europeans' lack of interest.

MK AVRAHAM Shapira, former owner of Carmel Carpets, and his wife Tova, have asked the Tel Aviv District Court to instruct the conglomerate's liquidator to stop giving interviews.

Shapira's lawyers, Yigal Arnon and Ya'acov Weingrod, claim that Yosef Cohen, the conglomerate's liquidator, purposely used

the media to turn the public against Shapira.

In the request, the lawyers said Cohen must remain objective in handling the episode.

The lawyers accused him of

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

Shapiras to court: Don't let liquidator talk with media

person will not publish anything on an issue pending in court if the publication is intended to influence the court procedure or its results.

According to the lawyers, the liquidator is a court-appointed clerk, and thus should not initiate ideas and give interviews.

submitting claims to the court and then immediately publishing them in the media before Shapira had a chance to react.

The lawyers claim Cohen's behavior is against the law.

The pertinent law states that "a

Elco, Swiss firm win \$19.5 million tender from IEC

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE Israel Electric Corporation (IEC) has awarded its \$19.5 million contract for the supply of transformers to Elco and the Swiss-based ABB.

The two companies will supply the IEC with two large industrial gas turbines for its Hagit and Gazer power stations.

Elco and ABB will supply two MCA 150 turbines and four MVA 175 turbines.

IEC said five firms participated in the tender, including Japanese, French and Greek companies.

In other news, IEC managing director Moshe Katz yesterday sent a letter to Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo emphasizing that the

city's Reading Power Station will continue to supply electricity.

The letter was sent following reports that the municipality plans to discuss the station's closure.

"The Reading Power Station is essential to the national electricity network, producing about eight percent of the country's electricity [and not 3% as stated by the municipality], said Katz. "The location of the station guarantees constant supply of electricity to Tel Aviv and the Gush Dan region."

Katz emphasized the station operates under environmental, building and planning laws.

Shekel falls 0.72% against dollar

JOSE ROSENFELD

DESPITE all the talk by the Bank of Israel that no devaluation is in sight, the shekel has lost significant ground against the dollar and the currency basket in the past two days.

The shekel fell 0.72 percent against the dollar yesterday to NIS 3.058, following a 0.53% drop on Tuesday. Similarly, the shekel lost 0.74% against the currency basket to NIS 3.3934, after falling 0.58% on Tuesday, bringing the exchange rate to less than 1% below the "crawling peg's" midpoint.

Bank Leumi chief currency trader Yisrael Sapir said that after an extended period of dollar selling in the foreign currency market, the dollar

rate was pushed so low for so long that businesses concluded it could go no lower before hitting the bottom of the exchange rate band.

On Tuesday, businesses began buying dollars to capitalize on existing attractive rates, spurred on by reports that the government's package deal may include a devaluation of the shekel.

"The exchange rate began rising, and the buying rally began snowballing until the Bank of Israel intervened at the end of the day to moderate the rate increases," said Sapir. He added that he expected rates to continue rising until they reach the "crawling peg's" midpoint.

Vegetable Board head: Prices will fall in next few months

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

MOST vegetable prices are expected to fall in the first two months of 1995, reflecting a significant growth in crops. Vegetable Board managing director Efraim Shalom predicted yesterday.

Shalom said there will be an oversupply of most vegetables within two months.

He said tomato crops will increase to 130,000 tons in January, equal to market demand, and 145,000 tons in February, which implies there will be an oversupply of 1,500 tons.

Potato prices have increased to NIS 3.4 per kilo on the wholesale market, from NIS 2.2 at the start of December.

An oversupply of carrots, cabbage and cauliflower is also expected in January and February, while market supply of onions is expected to equal demand.

Shalom said potato yields will increase to 101,000 tons over the winter months, half of which will be directed to the export market.

During the last few days, the Agriculture Ministry has approved the import of 2,000 tons of potatoes for industry from Turkey, following a 60% increase in price in the last two weeks.

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NEW DELHI (AP) - India and Israel yesterday agreed to accord each other the most favored nation status and enhance investment, industrial and technological cooperation through joint ventures.

The MFN status will cover import and export licenses, customs duties, trade and all payments in freely convertible currencies.

The five-year agreement was signed by India Commerce Minister Pranab Mukherjee and Industry and Trade Minister Micha Harish in New Delhi.

Both sides will facilitate contacts through exchange of delegations, participation in trade fairs and opening of offices of foreign trade organizations, companies and banks.

Harish called on India's business community to contribute to the peace process by getting involved in regional projects. India is already active in the region and has contributed \$1 million to the Palestinians.

India Finance Minister Amu-



Harish: Calls on India's business community to contribute to the peace process by getting involved in regional projects.

(Stern/Harari)

Mukherjee said normalization of trade partnership between the two countries was a logical extension of establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992.

The diplomatic ties were established after decades of hostility caused by India's support for the PLO.

Prior to 1992, Indian state-owned companies were barred from doing business with Israeli companies, accounting for a low trade level of \$150m. annually.

Trade increased by 42 percent in the first year of diplomatic ties and grew by another 200% in 1993.

Exports to India reached \$214m. last year, while imports totaled \$129m. This year's exports are expected to grow by 70%, the Industry and Trade Ministry reported.

In May last year, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres visited India. In talks with Indian officials, he discussed the possibility of setting up partnerships in third countries.

mohan Singh indicated his interest to sign a cooperation agreement between the Israel Foreign Trade Risk Insurance Company and its Indian equivalent, at his meeting with Harish.

Ararat Insurance Company's new managing director will begin tenure next week

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

ARARAT Insurance Company's new managing director, Uri Zafir, will begin his tenure next week, a company spokesman said yesterday.

Zafir, currently Clal Insurance deputy managing director, will take over from Avi Balaban on a temporary basis.

Ararat chairman Rimon Ben-Shaul has started to look for an external candidate to take over from Balaban, who announced his resignation earlier this week and will end his tenure on January 1.

Balaban said he resigned to get involved in private business.

But insurance sources said his

resignation had been expected following police suspicions that Ararat officials illegally moved a NIS 5.9 million portfolio in shares from an Ararat nostro account to the investment portfolio of life insurance policy holders, who also have a share in the company's profit.

A nostro account is a firm's own account for security transaction, rather than an account for clients' investments.

The police started investigating the episode several months ago based on the testimony of Rafi Magid, an investment manager fired from Ararat in April.

The police suspect the portfolio was transferred at the beginning of this year in the midst of

the crisis on the stock exchange. Balaban, in addition to other senior Clal and Ararat officials, was questioned under caution in connection with the episode.

"I want to praise Avi Balaban's behavior during Ararat's crisis when [investment manager Rafi] Magid resigned from the company," Clal Insurance Holdings managing director Yedidia Greenberg, who until recently was Ararat chairman, said at Ararat's last board meeting. "We worked together for two years. In recent months the media has caused unjustified harm to Avi. I wish him success."

Shortly after the Magid episode exploded, Clal management decided to transfer ownership of Ararat from Clal Insurance Holdings to Clal Insurance.

Fashion joins the peace train

RACHEL NEIMAN

MORE than 400 onlookers crowded into Jerusalem's Hyatt Hotel ballroom last night to catch a glimpse of the Middle East's first fashion show involving Israelis, Palestinians and Jordanians.

The event, attended by Economics and Planning Minister Shimon Shetret, was the finale to "Weaving Peace," a seminar sponsored by the Center for Jewish Arab Economic Development, the Manufacturers Association, Jordan's Al-Hayat group and the Israel Textile Union.

Delegations from Jordan, Egypt, the Palestinian Authority and Israel discussed subjects such as the influence of trade agreements on the region. "I have never seen so many Israeli businessmen at a public convention as today," said Lodzia-Rotex president Yair Rot-Levy. "It means Israelis are interested."

However, he also expressed disappointment that so few Palestinian and Jordanian representatives attended. Of the 340 registered participants, about 20 were from Jordan, 50 from the Palestinian Authority and a handful from Egypt. The remainder were from Israel.

Joint ventures will make the region a force to be reckoned with, said Rot-Levy. His sentiments were echoed by Omar Salah, owner of Amman-based Sal-tex, who said his country offered political stability, a high level of literacy, an advanced infrastructure and industry.

What Jordan lacked was access to markets which Israel could provide, he said, and prosperity would bring support for peace.

"Slowly but surely we must change attitudes by changing people's lives," Salah said.

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Leumi-Pia
Trust Management Company Ltd.
leumi pia
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Purchase Price: 133.19
Redemption Price: 131.09

PRIME Mutual Fund for Foreign Residents
Date: 20.12.94
Purchase Price: 96.25
Redemption Price: 94.82
leumi pia

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS				
Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (22.12.94)				
Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	5.825	6.125	6.750	
Swiss franc (CHF 200,000)	4.750	5.375	6.125	
German mark (DM 200,000)	4.500	5.000	5.875	
Yen (10 million yen)	3.125	3.375	3.750	
	0.750	0.875	1.000	
Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (21.12.94)				
CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep.
Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	3.0348	3.0775	2.98	3.3834
German mark	1.9327	1.9698	1.90	3.0580
French franc	4.7355	4.8021	4.64	1.9459
Japanese yen (100)	0.5602	0.5681	0.54	4.7654
Dutch guilder	3.0318	3.0744	2.98	0.5842
Swiss franc	1.7278	1.7519	1.70	3.0520
Swedish krona	2.2582	2.3174	2.24	1.7381
Norwegian krone	0.4047	0.4103	0.40	2.3021
Denmark krone	0.4425	0.4481	0.44	0.4080
Finland mark	0.4325	0.4381	0.43	0.4469
Canadian dollar	0.6291	0.6353	0.62	0.8310
Australian dollar	2.1774	2.2080	2.14	0.6551
S. African rand	0.8541	0.8661	0.84	2.1950
Belgian franc (10)	0.3407	0.3454	0.34	2.3725
Austrian schilling (10)	2.7469	2.7856	2.70	0.9707
Italian lire (1000)	1.3459	1.3719	1.30	2.282
Jordanian dinar	—	—	1.80	2.7880
Egyptian pound	3.6603	3.7321	3.62	1.5581
Irish punt	4.6556	4.7323	4.62	4.2885
Spanish peseta (100)	2.2525	2.3247	2.22	3.7086
			2.23	4.7076
				2.3067

* These rates vary according to bank. ** Bank of Israel.
SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

Key Representative Rates

US dollar	NIS 3.0580	+0.72%
Sterling	NIS 4.7664	+0.67%
Mark	NIS 1.9459	+0.80%

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

Andre Lumbroso

Two-Sided Index

176.30 +1.12%

Maof Index

177.30 +0.48%

Karam Index

155.36 +2.00%

Other stock market indexes

FTSE 100 3024.4 +1.23%

Nikkei 225 14,000.0 +0.50%

DAX 3,000.0 +0.50%

Hong Kong 10,000.0 +0.50%

S&P 500 4,000.0 +0.50%

Amex 100 1,000.0 +0.50%

Amex 200 2,000.0 +0.50%

Amex 300 3,000.0 +0.50%

Amex 400 4,000.0 +0.50%

Amex 500 5,000.0 +0.50%

Amex 600 6,000.0 +0.50%

Amex 700 7,000.0 +0.50%

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Amex 7,300 73,000.0 +0.50%

Amex 7,400 74,000.0 +0.50%

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading

Two-sided trading

Afternoon

Morning

Price

Volume

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Price

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Profit-taking can't dampen positive mood

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

Andre Lumbroso

Two-Sided Index

176.30 +1.12%

Maof Index

177.30 +0.48%

Karam Index

155.36 +2.00%

THE stock market remained in a positive mood, despite profit-taking toward the end of the day.

The Two-Sided Index rose 1.1 percent, the Maof 0.5%, and the Karam 2%. Turnover was somewhat higher at NIS 134.5 million.

The market opened with a surplus of buy orders on both the Karam and Meretz markets. On the Karam, it amounted to NIS 68m.

The sharp 2% price rises observed there and the surplus of buy orders reflected the delayed reaction to Tuesday's rises.

Rises outnumbered declines by 8 to 1. The same situation prevailed on the Meretz market, and the surplus of buy orders amounted to NIS 43m.

This was the product of small orders on the part of money managers.

There is a growing impression that the Karam market is raising its head.

Turnovers are generally above NIS 30m, which is not much, but one is able to observe significant activity on specific shares.

A few examples: United Steel was up 3.2% on a turnover of NIS 170,000 and Mizrahi Investment rose 5% on a turnover of NIS 160,000.

The gap between the Two-Sided and Karam is closing, a sign that investors are somewhat more interested in the Karam.

It may not be a return of the bull market, but it's a sign that something is going on.

On the Two-Sided market, there was also an 8 to 1 ratio between rises and declines.

There was a significant rise in turnovers in selected shares, generally blue chips.

The most traded security was Israel Chemicals, which declined by 2.1% on a turnover of NIS 7.6m. Discount Investment was up 2% on a NIS 7.2m turnover and Koor 1.3% on a NIS 7m turnover.

There was the usual interest in the speculative issues, with T-Bone Veal up 5%, Avner 6.8%, Malal 10.1%, Passport 7.1% and Meir Ezra 5.8%.

There was a slight weakening of the market toward the end of trading, and prices declined, albeit slowly during the last two hours, particularly on the Maof.

There were suspicions that the Maof arbitrageurs were back, artificially depressing the market. There were no signs, however, that this was occurring on the Maof Options market.

Now that the issue of the tax is over, the expectation of a devaluation rears its ugly head.

The demand for the shekel on the interbank market rose sharply, and the exchange rate declined 0.7%. This led to increased demand for dollar-linked bonds and sharp price rises on the Dollar Options Market. The 3.00 and the 3.05 December CALL rose more than 50%.

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Turnovers are generally above NIS 30m, which is not much, but one is

Maccabean effort wins Jerusalem derby

JOEL GORDIN

THE underdog had its day in the capital last night.

Maccabi Jerusalem thumped Hapoel Jerusalem 84-70 at Malha, the only upset in the 14th round of the National Basketball League.

Hapoel, easy winners in the season's first Jerusalem derby, stormed to an early 11-1 lead, nine of the points coming from three-pointers. However, assumptions of another Hapoel walkover did not take into account mighty Joe Dawson, who kept Maccabi in the game by hitting a massive 28 first-half points.

The teams went to the locker rooms tied 38-38. Dawson slowed down after the break, but it didn't matter because Hapoel kept shooting itself in the foot with careless losses of possession and missed shots. Only Billy Thompson (23 points) came up roses for the discredited favorites, although John Dalzell hit four threes in his 15.

For Maccabi, Dawson totaled 33, Shawn Green 15.

Maccabi 84, Hapoel 70

Rishon kept a firm hold on second place with a big home win over the lackadaisical, slow-moving southerners.

Eilat was in the game until the break (Rishon led only 50-49) but then simply rolled over and died. Heartening news for Rishon fans was the return to top form of James Gully. The burly center banged in 25 and snatched 19 rebounds. Gerald Paddio was also red hot with 28, Tomer Karmi had 24, Danny Gott 16.

For Eilat, Andrew Kennedy made 27, Brian Rowson 19. Hapoel Holon 87, Hapoel Gvat 75. Holon's "home game" was staged at Netanya, as punishment for unruly fan behavior in previous games.

Gvat used a one-man show by Derrick Gervin to take a 40-39 halftime lead, but after the break Holon started to dictate the pace with powerful defense and speedy fast breaks. Ralph Klein's men showed they may yet make an impact in the league.

For Holon, David Thirdkill made 22, Tomer Steinhilber 21, Shelton Jones 21. For Gvat, Gervin hit 38; next best was Rodney Munro's 11.

Hapoel 92, Hapoel 79

Galil led the homeowners 46-42 at halftime and broke it open

right after the break with a 7-0 run. For the rest of the way they had a leisurely stroll over their demoralized opponents, who are still playing with only one foreigner, for financial reasons.

Darryn Daye made 24 for Galil; Michael Kennedy 22 for Haifa.

Mac. TA 80, Mac. Ramat Gan 76

Ramat Gan surprised the visiting champions by taking an early 14-13 lead, but Doron Jamchee scored 10 in succession and Tel Aviv pulled ahead for a halftime score of 44-37.

Ramat Gan shocked even their own supporters by cruising ahead to a five point lead. It took all of Tel Aviv's efforts and some snappy shooting by Jamchee to regain the lead.

The result was in doubt until the final seconds when Radisav Curcic hit both ends of a one and one. This one could easily have gone astray, if Ramat Gan had showed more polish at the end.

For Tel Aviv, Jamchee sunk 21, Norris Coleman 18. For Ramat Gan, Riklis was great with 21; John Eubanks made 16, Lamont Strothers 15.

Hapoel 91, Hapoel Gvatayim 83

Tel Aviv, still not out of its depression, did not shine against a weak opponent. The win was not a good reflection of the run of the play as Tel Aviv won more by good luck than good basketball.

Tel Aviv's Buck Johnson fouled out with 25, Milton Wagner hit 22. For Givatayim, Gary Plummer had 24 and red-hot Amos Frishman 21.

The 14th round ends tonight when Bnei Herzliya further humiliates the Betar Ramat Gan kiddie squad.

National Basketball League

1. Maccabi Tel Aviv 13 1 27
2. Maccabi Rishon 11 3 23
3. Hapoel Gvatayim 9 5 23
4. Hapoel Gvatayim 8 6 22
5. Hapoel Holon 8 6 22
6. Hapoel Gvatayim 7 6 20
7. Bnei Herzliya 6 8 20
8. Maccabi Ramat Gan 6 8 19
9. Hapoel Gvatayim 6 8 18
10. Hapoel Gvatayim 5 9 18
11. Hapoel Gvatayim 4 10 18
12. Hapoel Gvatayim 3 11 18
13. Hapoel Gvatayim 2 12 15
14. Betar Ramat Gan 0 13 13

* Hapoel Tel Aviv has been penalized four points for financial irregularities.

Mac. Rishon 110, Hapoel Eilat 95

Hapoel Gvatayim 87, Hapoel Gvatayim 79

Mac. TA 80, Mac. Ramat Gan 76

Mac. J'leem 84, Hapoel J'leem 70

Hapoel Tel Aviv 91, Givatayim 83

Wessels 'calls it a day'

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) - Kepler Wessels, who played Test cricket for both South Africa and Australia, has decided to retire from the game at international level.

Wessels, 37, said on Tuesday: "There comes a time when you know you have to call it a day."

Ali Bacher, head of the United Cricket Board of South Africa, said Wessels had made the decision to retire after talks with himself and convenor of selectors Peter Pollock over the past two days.

Bacher described him as "one of the greatest cricketers" he had known.

Wessels quit South Africa during its years of sporting isolation caused by apartheid and played 24 Tests for Australia, opening

his international career with a century against England. He returned to play for South Africa in its final series of matches against a rebel Australian team and soon after, the country was readmitted to international cricket. Wessels was appointed captain of the national squad.

Wessels led South Africa to the semifinals of the World Cup in Australia and captained them in 13 Tests, drawing series with Australia and England, beating Sri Lanka and India and losing a one-off test against West Indies.

But a longstanding knee injury has given him increasing problems and he has taken no part in the recent series against New Zealand.

"In simple terms, he has a gut



GUTSY - Kepler Wessels decides it's time to retire. (AP)

feeling that the time is right for him to retire from Test cricket," said Bacher.

Gooch, Stewart battle for opener slot

MELBOURNE (Reuters) - England captain Mike Atherton said yesterday that veteran batsman Graham Gooch could be in line to replace Alec Stewart as opener for the second Ashes Test against Australia.

The tourists, trailing 1-0 in the five-Test series, are considering dropping vice-captain Stewart down the order.

"It's one of the points we will have to discuss," said Atherton, who opened with Stewart when England crashed to a 184-run defeat in the first Test in Brisbane.

Stewart and Atherton added 24 and 50 in Brisbane. Gooch, who has been an opener for most of his Test career, went in first in this week's tour match against Queensland, making 50 and seven.

Gooch, 41, opened the innings during the first month of the tour after Stewart broke a finger.

Atherton handed wicket-keeper Steven Rhodes a vote of confidence, confirming he would play in the Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground starting on Saturday.

Rhodes has been struggling for form with both bat and gloves recently, prompting speculation that Stewart would take over behind the stumps.

That would allow England to fill Rhodes's place with an extra batsman or bowler as they seek to get back into the series.

Rhodes, 30, has scored only 143 runs in first-class cricket on his first senior tour and last week dropped two catches in England's narrow World Series win over Australia A in Melbourne.

Ewing foul-line flop costs Knicks

Jazz king of the road; Mavericks win again

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Armon Gilliam hit a 15-foot baseline jumper with 20 seconds left to lift the New Jersey Nets to an 85-83 victory over the New York Knicks on Tuesday.

Patrick Ewing went to the foul line with seven seconds left and a chance for the Knicks to tie the game, but missed the second of his two free throws as New Jersey held on to its 84-83 lead.

Gilliam made one of two free throws with four seconds left to give the Nets an 85-83 advantage, and then Hubert Davis of the Knicks missed a running one-hander in the lane at the buzzer.

Magic 108, Trail Blazers 104

Horace Grant had six points and Shaquille O'Neal added five in an 18-4 run in the third quarter as Orlando won on the road.

Grant finished with 20 points and O'Neal had 30 points, 11 rebounds and five blocks for the Magic, which extended their winning streak over the Blazers to five games.

Clyde Drexler had 26 and Clifford Robinson chipped in 20 and 12 rebounds for Portland.

Jazz 91, 76ers 88

John Stockton's layup with 1:02 left gave Utah the lead for good as the Jazz won a team-record ninth straight road win.

Philadelphia held an 84-77 advantage with 4:50 left before Utah went on a 14-4 run to end the game.

Karl Malone had 24 points and Jeff Hornacek 17 for Utah.

Barros had 24 and Greg Graham scored a career-high 20 points for Philadelphia, which lost for the sixth time in seven games.

Hawks 115, Bucks 97

Stacey Augmon and Steve Smith led a decisive second-quarter run and Ken Norman scored 28 to give visiting Atlanta a victory in a battle of the two



GRAND THEFT - Hornets' Muggsy Bogues (r) steals the ball from Pacers' Mark Jackson. (AP)

bottom teams in the Central Division. Mookie Blaylock had 20 points and 11 assists for the Hawks; Glenn Robinson scored 22 to pace the Bucks.

Hornets 99, Pacers 95

Alonzo Mourning had 22 points and 12 rebounds, including a jam during a six-point run late in the game, as Charlotte won for the ninth time in 13 games and stopped visiting Indiana's three-game winning streak.

Larry Johnson had 18 points and 10 rebounds for Charlotte and Muggsy Bogues added 10 points and eight assists.

TUESDAY'S RESULTS:

Utah 91, Philadelphia 88
Atlanta 115, Milwaukee 97
New Jersey 85, New York 83
Orlando 108, Portland 104
Seattle 110, L.A. Clippers 79
L.A. Lakers 108, Minnesota 95
Dallas 110, Golden State 107
Sacramento 105, Washington 102

Mavericks 110, Warriors 107

Jamal Mashburn hit a pair of three-pointers in the final two minutes to help Dallas on the road. Golden State lost its 10th straight.

The Warriors took a 98-96 lead with 2:00 left on a jumper by Latrell Sprewell, but Mashburn hit a trey to give Dallas the lead for good.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

Utah 17 8 .680 2
Houston 13 12 .520 2
Dallas 12 8 .600 2.5
Denver 12 9 .571 3
San Antonio 11 10 .524 6
Minnesota 5 19 .217 11

Pacific Division

Phoenix 18 5 .783 2
Seattle 15 7 .682 2.5
L.A. Lakers 14 8 .636 3.5
Sacramento 12 10 .545 5.5
Portland 11 10 .524 6
Golden State 9 15 .348 10
LA Clippers 3 20 .130 15

WASHINGTON (AP) - For the first time since baseball shut down four months ago, there were subtle signs Tuesday that players and owners really want to make a deal.

No breakthroughs were evident and no joint meetings took place during the day. But with the owners' deadline looming to impose a salary cap, there appeared to be more urgency to settle.

"It's time to make a deal if we want one," Colorado Rockies chairman Jerry McMorris said. "There will be compromises reached. There will be give and take on various parts."

As the strike went through its 131st day - matching the length of the fractured 1994 season - the National Labor Relations Board ruled against owners for the second time in less than a week. The board dismissed the owners' unfair labor practice charge against players for allegedly making threats against potential strikebreakers.

Still, there were signs that both sides were seriously searching for middle ground.

The union's Eugene Orza said he perceived an increase in management's desire to make a deal. Implementation of a salary cap, which could come as soon as tomorrow, would provoke a court fight that could lead to games with replacement players next season.

Orza cautioned that interest in making a deal may not lead to an agreement. "We'll find out in the next 72 hours, I guess," he said.

New look in the works for Yankee Stadium

NEW YORK (AP) - Architects unveiled a new design for Yankee Stadium, complete with 70 new luxury boxes, thousands of new parking spaces and development for the surrounding neighborhood.

The plan comes from the architecture firm of Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum, creators of the Camden Yards, the widely acclaimed Baltimore Orioles' ballpark. The proposal was stymied by threats that Yankees owner George Steinbrenner might move the team to New Jersey.

The lease on Yankee Stadium runs through 2002.

A major feature of the proposal would be a throwback to the stadium's original 1923 look - a new facade set back 40 feet from the existing facade, which would permit more concession facilities. The plan includes the luxury boxes and new field-level "dug-out" seats.

There's also a proposed addition of several thousand parking spaces, raising the total to 10,000 and a possible picnic area in the left field bleachers.

For the South Bronx, there's a proposed sports entertainment complex; a proposed new high school and improvements on River Avenue, which runs alongside the stadium.

A cost estimate for the renovations was not provided - although the city paid \$631,000 for the preliminary plan. Both Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and governor-elect George Pataki are awaiting briefings on the proposal.

The Sports Pages are edited by Joe Hoffman

NHL owners rumored ready for deal

TORONTO (AP) - More than 200 National Hockey League players met yesterday for what was expected to be the last time before officials decide whether to cancel the rest of the season.

The players were called together by union chief Bob Goodenow as reports circulated of a possible major change in the owners' bargaining position. Both sides agreed that time was running out to settle the dispute that has shut down the league since October 1.

"This is the last time we'll meet like this before a decision is made," said Tie Domi of the Winnipeg Jets.

Sources told the Canadian Press the league has made a contract proposal that doesn't include a payroll tax, which has been a deal-breaker.

Players may consider the proposal too costly, but it will likely be a starting point for negotiations to resume, probably next week.

Some management officials, and especially general managers, have said they are confident that a secret vote was taken, players would accept the owners' last proposal.

There have been no direct talks since December 6, although low-level negotiations last week made some progress.

Teenage bowlers show promise

NORMAN SPIRO

THE next generation of bowlers showed their stuff at an all-day round-robin pairs tournament at the Ramat Gan Club. A squad of 18 selected juniors (17-18-year-olds) enhanced their reputation as an exciting emerging force, playing skillfully against some of the country's international bowlers.

The young pairing of Roy Jennings and Assaf Gringrad were unbeaten in their section, counting among their victims the powerful combinations of Chaim Miller/Leon Blum and Chaim Shefer/Joel Goldberg - all of international reputation.

Similar credible wins were achieved by Michael Stange/

Motti Pollak and Eyal Shefer/Amir Yaron, the latter with an excellent win against George Kaminsky/Yair Gavish.

In the women's section, Tali Waisel, Yael Skikne, Liat Atlas and Tamar Rakiya all led for international skips, giving good support and showing promising form.

In an all-youth finals playoff, Yaron, the national singles champion, paired with Stange, beat Sher/Pollak 21-3, while Jennings/Boaz Marcus had a narrow last-head 8-7 win over Assaf Iron/Gringrad. Yair Bekier/Atlas beat Tomer Sandler/Rakiya 17-11.

Player of the Day awards went to Jennings and Atlas.

Rugby player jailed for head kick

CARDIFF (AP) - A judge has jailed a rugby union player for six months for stamping on an opponent's head during a game.

A jury decided that 28-year-old prop forward Howard Collins deliberately kicked Christian Evans twice during a ruck in a game between Pencoed and Cardiff Institute.

Evans, 22, needed 10 stitches in a gaping head wound and also plastic surgery. He was left in severe pain and was temporarily deafened by the attack.

"This was wholly outside the rules of the game and totally unacceptable," prosecutor Huw Evans said during Tuesday's hearing. "It was a deliberate and malicious attack on a defenseless man. It incensed the crowd."

Ifs, ands, buts of the puzzling NFL playoff race

NEW YORK (AP) - There are some certainties about the National Football League playoff race:

● The San Francisco 49ers and Pittsburgh Steelers will have home-field advantage right up to the Super Bowl.

● The Dallas Cowboys, Miami Dolphins, San Diego Chargers and Cleveland Browns have qualified for the postseason.

● Nine teams, including four-fifths of the NFC's Central Division, are in the running for the remaining six playoff spots.

Among those teams are one that lost seven straight (the New York Giants), one that has done

almost all its winning behind a backup quarterback (the Chicago Bears) and one that seems to win despite itself (the Los Angeles Raiders).

There are six teams going for four NFC berths - the Central title and three wild cards. None of those combatants plays each other, but on Saturday the Bears host the Patriots who must win or have Kansas City lose to the Raiders to get an AFC wild card. The Patriots also could win the AFC East by beating the Bears and having Miami lose to Detroit on Christmas night.

In the NFC Central, everybody but Tampa Bay has a shot at the division crown and a wild card. In fact, the pecking order is clear: Minnesota, Detroit, Chicago and Green Bay.

If all four win, all are in, with Minnesota taking the division. If any of them lose, they're in danger of having the Giants or Cardinals steal away the wild-card berth.

The Vikings might have the easiest assignment, yet the toughest task. All they need is a final-game victory to finish 10-6 and win the division. But that victory must come against the best team in the league, the 49ers, on Mon-

day night, after everyone else has finished.

And if they lose, while the other three Central teams win, they could sink to fourth in the division, and out of the playoffs if Arizona beats Atlanta and Dallas beats the Giants.

Four of the contenders meet Saturday: the Patriots vs. the Bears, and the Chiefs vs. the Raiders. The winner of Kansas City-Los Angeles is in, no matter what the Patriots do.

Two contenders - the Lions and Dolphins - meet Sunday night.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

*Dallas 12 3 0 .800 404 230
*San Francisco 9 6 0 .600 336 285
*Atlanta 8 7 0 .533 299 285
*Philadelphia 7 8 0 .467 297 311
Washington 2 13 0 .133 236 391

Central

Minnesota 9 6 0 .600 337 315
Detroit 9 6 0 .600 269 254
Green Bay 8 7 0 .533 348 288
Chicago 6 9 0 .400 222 317

West

*San Francisco 12 2 0 .857 491 276
New Orleans 6 9 0 .400 318 381
Atlanta 6 9 0 .400 307 379
LA Raiders 4 11 0 .267 295 341

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

*Miami 9 6 0 .600 362 307
New England 9 6 0 .600 338 308
Buffalo 7 8 0 .467 331 348
Indianapolis 7 8 0 .467 297 311
NY Jets 6 9 0 .400 254 296

Central

*Pittsburgh 12 3 0 .800 362 197
Cleveland 10 5 0 .667 306 196
Cincinnati 2 13 0 .133 243 376
Houston 1 14 0 .067 202 342

West

*San Diego 10 5 0 .667 344 272
LA Raiders 9 6 0 .600 294 284
Kansas City 8 7 0 .533 300 289
Denver 7 8 0 .467 319 386
Seattle 6 9 0 .400 292 298

*clashed division **clashed playoff spot

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GENERAL

DWELLINGS

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JERUSALEM

DWELLINGS



Knesset Speaker Shevah Weiss (foreground) and Likud MKs Tzahi Hanegbi and Michael Eitan donate blood yesterday in the annual drive by Magen David Adom at the Knesset. A total of 16 out of 120 legislators took part. (Isaac Harari)

Rabin expected to find jobs for Yi'ud MKs by Saturday night

PRIME Minister Yitzhak Rabin hopes that by Saturday night he will be able to tell Yi'ud MKs Gonen Segev and Alex Goldfarb the positions he has for them, thus bringing them into the coalition.

Rabin met with the two yesterday and told them he still has no portfolio for Segev or a deputy ministership for Goldfarb, but that he hopes to find these by Saturday night.

His one achievement was to convince Segev to drop his categorical refusal to consider a new ministry custom-tailored for him — an infrastructure ministry.

Segev initially said he had "no interest in a ragtag assortment of rejects from other ministries artificially stitched together." But af-

ter meeting Rabin, he said he would "consider an infrastructure portfolio only if it proves to have real substance, one which would give me real executive tasks and authority, not just an empty title."

But the creation of this new portfolio is running into trouble. It would be based on part of Energy Minister Moshe Shabai's portfolio, and Shabai — who is also police minister — has refused to relinquish this portfolio, whose full name is the Energy and Infrastructure Ministry.

Rabin's advisers then came up with the notion of lifting the in-

frastructure title and making it a separate portfolio. For this, Shabai would have to yield control of the Geological Institute, which he is reportedly not averse to doing.

A greater problem is Segev's demand for other bits. This would necessitate the Interior Ministry giving up the National Sewage Authority; the Agriculture Ministry divesting itself of the Water Commission and the Israel Lands Administration; and the Housing Ministry ceding the Public Works Department responsibility for road construction.

None of the ministers involved

has agreed to make any sacrifices for Segev, and Rabin reportedly intends to apply pressure with the argument that unless they yield, the failure to expand the coalition would be theirs.

Rabin, meanwhile, canceled last night's Labor ministerial caucus that was to and take up the proper reward for the two Yi'ud MKs move into the coalition. A source close to Rabin said it was thought he would do better in pressuring ministers individually, rather than allow group dynamics to increase each holdout's defiance.

Rabin must come up with a solution by Sunday's cabinet meeting, when he must bring the new ministerial appointments up for approval.

Histadrut to negotiate sale of 'Davar' to French buyer

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

TEN days before closing down *Davar*, Histadrut leaders finally decided yesterday to enter into intensive negotiations with French millionaire Jean Friedman, who is interested in buying the newspaper.

It is not clear whether the Histadrut will continue financing *Davar's* publication until the end of the negotiations, should the talks continue after January 1.

Davar's journalists had recommended Friedman's proposal to the Histadrut leadership at the beginning of the week, but until yesterday did not know whether Histadrut Chairman Haim Ramon would accept their recommendation or would refuse to cooperate.

Davar's Action Committee member Efraim Davidi urged the Histadrut leaders again yesterday to begin the negotiations over *Davar's* purchase, "because we are rapidly approaching the end

of the year, which is when Ramon promised to cut off all funds from the newspaper, effectively closing us down," Davidi said.

The journalists also asked Ramon and Histadrut Treasurer Haim Oron to continue funding the paper until the new newspaper — under new ownership — appears. "Otherwise, *Davar* will close down and the few readers we still have will move away to other newspapers. Besides, how can you sell a dead newspaper, and who will want to buy it?" Davidi explained.

He noted that the workers hoped the Histadrut would agree, because even before Friedman's offer was made Ramon had promised \$1 million a year in aid to *Davar* to enable the workers to purchase a part of the paper.

In addition, none of the work-

ers had received dismissal notices yet, which perhaps indicates that the Histadrut intends to continue its existence for a while, he said.

Meanwhile, *Davar's* editorial offices on Sheinkin Street have been getting numerous letters and telephone queries by readers concerned with the newspaper's continued publication, and from those interested in renewing their subscriptions.

Until last week, Netanyahu contractor Yitzhak Tshuva was vying with Friedman over *Davar*. However, after the majority of the paper's journalists voted on Sunday in favor of Friedman's proposal, the lawyers representing Tshuva resigned, leaving only Friedman's offer.

Tshuva, incidentally, has recently purchased the controlling interest in *Al Hamishmar* and was considering merging it with *Davar* and forming one new paper.

Information blitz planned on new health insurance

JUDY SIEGEL

AN information campaign explaining the national health insurance system is to be launched on Friday by the Health Ministry.

The campaign, organized jointly with the National Insurance Institute, will include advertisements in the press and announcements on TV and radio.

An information booklet will also be distributed through local Schocken papers. Anyone who does not receive the booklet may order a free copy by calling 177-022-1811.

In addition, the ministry will sponsor an open phone line (177-022-3003) on Monday and Tuesday between 4 and 7 p.m.

The ministry said yesterday that people who hold a health insurance policy with a private insurer may not choose a public health fund for six months; the ministry will decide who will insure them (apportioned according to the relative size of the four public insurers).

At the end of six months, these residents will be able to choose membership in any of the four. Questions about health fund membership may be answered by calling 177-022-3004 Sundays through Thursdays between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Kupat Holim Clalit will automatically cancel members' standing orders at the bank for payment of membership fees the first week of January, so members can avoid paying bank cancellation fees. The last membership payment will be charged on January 8; on the following month, the National Insurance Institute will start deducting payment for health taxes.

Clalit yesterday asked members not to cancel their standing orders in December, because the national health insurance system affects the December salary paid in early January.

Sneh oversees new guidelines for geriatric hospitals

JUDY SIEGEL

THE Health Ministry has decided to revolutionize the procedures and financial arrangements for accepting patients into long-term geriatric hospitals, which includes not forcing sons and daughters-in-law to report their income in order to decide how much the family must pay.

Health Minister Ephraim Sneh also decided that the state will not touch the first NIS 40,000 of a couple's savings when one of them has to be hospitalized in an institution. Until now, half of all savings were taken by the state to help cover expenses. When the person to be hospitalized is not married, savings under NIS 20,000 will not be touched.

In addition, the request for bank statements of cash accounts to help committees decide on eligibility for state help will be canceled. From time to time, the person hospitalized will be asked to declare income, which is the practice at the National Insurance Institute, and a sample patient's income will be examined closely.

The ministry also decided to increase the number of state-subsidized geriatric patients by 350.

The ministry noted that the new procedures will greatly ease the situation for 7,000 chronically ill hospitalized geriatric patients and for the 1,400 waiting for recognition of eligibility.

The long-standing regulations have caused family disputes in which spouses of patients' children refused to disclose their income, thus preventing the parent from being hospitalized. Families also had to present a pile of official documents about their income, including property, bank accounts, savings and compensation from Germany. In some cases, people separated from their spouse or a second wife or husband had to pay for hospitalization of the new spouse's parent.

Ministry sources said their ultimate aim is to establish fixed rates for family participation in geriatric hospitalization, instead of having to investigate income. But setting up such a system must be done carefully, so that grown children who now care for their parents at home aren't given the incentive to "get rid of them" by hospitalizing them at a reasonable rate.

Knesset panel favors opening up adoption field

MK Livnat: Government has created 'lawless black market'

EVELYN GORDON

THE Knesset Law Committee yesterday came out in favor of allowing non-governmental agencies to help couples with overseas adoptions, despite the objections of the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry.

The committee was discussing a series of bills dealing with overseas adoptions, which are currently not regulated by law. In practice, however, the Labor Ministry has a monopoly on arranging such adoptions, and a government bill to regulate the field would not change this situation.

An alternative bill proposed by Limor Livnat (Likud), however, would open the adoption field to private non-profit organizations, such as Na'amat and WIZO. Livnat explained that the ministry

has proven unable to meet the needs of would-be adoptive parents for quick service and accurate information, and that private organizations might be able to do so better.

The government monopoly, she said, has created "a completely lawless black market" in overseas adoptions.

The ministry argued that a governmental agency would have the child's welfare at heart, rather than being motivated by profit. However, responded committee chairman Dedi Zucker (Meretz), Livnat's bill would license non-profit organizations, not profit-making corporations.

"The government has no monopoly on sensitivity to the good

of the child," he said.

The Justice Ministry, unlike the Labor Ministry, does not object to Livnat's proposal.

Two other amendments proposed by Livnat and Anat Maor (Meretz) would eliminate the requirement that an adopted child be of the same religion as his adoptive parents. This is necessary, the MKs said, because the rabbinate has stopped converting children adopted into non-observant households. While in practice, adoptions of non-Jewish children by non-observant families have continued, it would be better to adjust the law to the reality, they said.

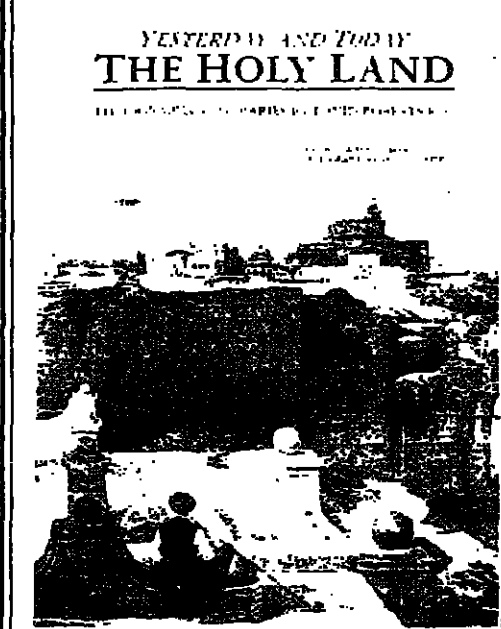
Livnat noted that this would not solve the whole problem,

since these children would still be considered non-Jewish by the rabbinate and therefore will not be allowed to marry Jews when they come of age. It is not even clear whether children converted by the rabbinate in the past will be recognized as Jews when they want to marry, if they grew up in non-observant households, she said.

However, she added, this is not a problem the Knesset can solve, because it has no authority on questions of Jewish law.

The conversion of children adopted by non-observant parents is a particularly thorny problem in Jewish law, because Jews are subject to many religious obligations which do not apply to non-Jews. Thus, if someone does not intend to observe these rules, Jewish law considers it better for him or her to remain a non-Jew, and therefore not be obligated to do so.

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KNESSET BRIEFS

● Deputy Defense Minister Mordechai Gur said the incident in Ramallah last week in which reservist soldier Shmuel Meiri was almost lynched would "leave its mark" on the negotiations with the Palestinians over the IDF redeployment in Judea and Samaria.

● The Knesset passed an amendment to the National Health Insurance Law adjusting the health tax for the elderly and other welfare recipients, and determining procedures to make certain that all 250,000 people who do not have health insurance today will be enrolled in one of the health funds as of January 1 when the law goes into effect.

● Avraham Poraz (Meretz) demanded of House Committee chairman Hagai Merom to allow for discussing his proposal to put a time limit of up to 20 minutes on MKs to express their reservations about bills being presented in final reading. Poraz said the current situation allows MKs to conduct filibusters by submitting meaningless alternative proposals just to earn more speaking time.

Dan Izenberg